

BOSTON COLLEGE

SPRING 2011

MAGAZINE



STUDY ABROAD

SILK ROAD PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX GUITTARD '11

PROLOGUE

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

According to some of our oldest stories, meaningful travel—the kind that's undertaken for more than the merely practical need to track down a deer or an enemy or a valley not threatened by a glacier—was initially fostered by the gods. Shamash, the Bronze Age sun deity of Mesopotamia, seems to have been first off the mark, using dreams to guide Gilgamesh in his search for eternal life, a journey that ultimately concluded with Gilgamesh's discovery that immortality was just not available to him, though meaningful work was. Shortly thereafter and to the west, a passel of gods alternately aided and tormented Odysseus with their instructions during a long but ultimately successful journey to home. And the Bible is, of course, replete with God-directed journeys, beginning with Adam and Eve scurrying out the gates of Eden, then Noah's voyage, and passing on to Abram (he was not yet "Abraham") and Sarai (not yet "Sarah"), who gathered "all their substance" and obeyed God's unambiguous "Get thee out of thy country . . . unto the land which I shall show thee." And that doesn't get us a third of the way through Genesis.

Several thousand years after these excursions were first scored in tablets or inked on parchment, during the Middle Ages, business- and God-ordained travel (pilgrimage, to give the latter its proper Christian name) remained pretty much the only categories of expedition known to human beings. Of course, functions of travel taken for granted by us moderns, such as repose or adventure, could hardly have made sense to men and women with no greater ability to conceive of leisure than of particle colliders, and who could hardly have wished for more "adventure" than that already provided by unpredictable weather, children's fevers, and errant knife blades. In any case, it would have been impossible to associate pleasure of any kind with treks through territories replete with bandits, plagues, wolves, pestiferous inns, and wandering armies of uncertain loyalty and meager discipline (medieval Europe, in short).

Traders and diplomats (who made up most of the commercial traffic) were typically moneyed and experienced enough to surround themselves with personal security details, frequently and shrewdly hired from the local soldiery or banditry, depending on which happened to be more reliable. For religious pilgrims, many of whom entered into their excursions naked to hardships and dangers that ultimately included martyrdom, the privations

were made endurable, or even welcome, by the understanding that they could be exchanged for forgiveness of sins and heaven's favor. And the martyrologies of the time do indeed present stories of men and women who deliberately placed themselves (and companions and even minor charges) in mortal danger, with the hope—soon enough realized, according to these records—that their deaths would prove uplifting when entered as evidence of hurt endured for the glory of God.

As Europe became a somewhat more settled place in the High Middle Ages, the number of men and women who took to the pilgrim trail increased, and destination churches—thousands of shrines by this time strung out across Europe and West Asia, Canterbury to Bethlehem—responded by entering into competition for the business, disseminating guidebooks, sending out postings about the latest additions to their relic collections, the newest saints associated with their sites, and the cures that could be attributed to the touch of their tombs or a sip of their very own holy water (conveniently available in lead bottles for safe transport home). This business and its associated cash flow became terribly important to participating shrines, including Westminster Abbey, a big player that claimed to hold both Jacob's pillow and Christ's footprints, and that in 1244 acquired a vial said to contain the Lord's blood. This moved a practical English bishop not to piety but to announce that as the "true cross" segment recently acquired by France drew its holiness only from the fact that it had been touched by Jesus's blood, England "rejoices in a greater treasure."

And inevitably, dutiful seekers—some of whom sold every stick they owned so as to afford their religious quests—responded to this marketplace of holiness by seeking market value in their pilgrim progressions, carefully and proudly recording in their journals the miles traveled, the number and quality of relics venerated, discomforts bravely endured, lists of questions to ask oneself on entering a new city, useful foreign phrases and travel habits (always carry a chamber pot when climbing a hill), and of course descriptions of marvels, from funeral processions to circumcisions. "Curiositas" replaced "pietas" as the pilgrim's central yearning (after business), and it's been that way since.

Alex Guitard's photographic account of sights viewed on pilgrimage begins on page 26.

—BEN BIRNBAUM

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BOSTON COLLEGE

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LETTERS

THE STARTUP

The Winter 2011 issue of *Boston College Magazine* contained an excellent article by David Reich entitled "Solasta, Chapter One" concerning the efforts of three Boston College professors, Mike Naughton, Zhifeng Ren, and Kris Kempa, to commercialize a novel approach to solar photovoltaics. Most journalistic reports on science and engineering miss the mark by engaging in hyperbole (e.g., "this invention will totally revolutionize and change our lives by...") and, in an effort to make things readable to the general public, by oversimplifying the science to the point of being plain wrong.

Reich's article was different: it painted a compelling picture of the tensions between scientists and venture capitalists, criticizing neither but conveying their different needs, desires, and approaches to life. The vignettes of the legendary, but fallible, Bill Joy and Solasta's CEO were also quite interesting. The article got the science essentially right and conveyed the difficulties of getting materials to behave as one would like. It also got the human drama, if not perfectly right, certainly readable, understandable, and poignant.

Hank Smith, Ph.D. '66
Sudbury, Massachusetts

The writer is a professor of electrical engineering and associate director of the NanoStructures Laboratory at MIT.

The article on Solasta by David Reich points to a number of mistakes that others can learn from:

One should never take funds from VCs before the technology works well. Solasta's founders took funds from VCs at the idea stage (well before they had a working technology) and this doomed them, since technology development is not fully predictable and VCs want a fully predictable exit in three to five years.

At the idea stage it is far better to accept smaller amounts from foundations that offer grants without extracting equity

and that are patient to see the technology development through its cycle. True, the development process can take longer, but at the same time there are no VCs to close the company.

As a general rule, a university that wants to spin off companies should have its own incubation fund and strong connections to foundations awarding grants to early-stage technology development teams. Once the technology starts working, it is better to engage a strategic partner who can become the user of the technology/product and who will fund the project. This is a much healthier relationship than one with VCs.

Thanks to Joe Sparacino '00, who passed the Solasta article on to me.

Raul Brauner
Framingham, Massachusetts

The writer is co-founder and CEO of Bio-Tree Systems.

"Solasta, Chapter One" is a cautionary tale of gown meets town. Only one in eight venture-financed endeavors ever make it to round two. Along with dreams of riches and of changing the world comes a ticking clock. Science works to Deaderline's Law: "Things take longer than they do." The venture capital tyranny of time dictates short cuts and quick fixes. Legendary all-nighters are not done willingly, but rather to beat the clock. The article was a good but predictable read. Across the quad from Physics is Business. It is a greater distance than it appears.

Jack Falvey '60
Londonderry, New Hampshire

PRINCE OF A MAN

Re "Campanella's Way" and the recollections by J. Donald Monan, SJ, and Jack Neuhauser (Winter 2011): Frank Campanella behaved like the ultimate Renaissance prince when he took tricky economic times for Boston College (I was there!) and created the new Boston College. When I look at the photograph in

his death notice, I see the best that humanity offers a few times in each generation. His likeness could be painted with the campus behind him.

Rose Doherty, MA'68
Needham, Massachusetts

IMMERSION

Walls. Topped with barbed wire or shards of glass stuck upright into cement. . . . Walls to tell stories. Walls to keep in. Keep out.

Elizabeth Graver begins her account of a recent trip to Nicaragua ("Distance Education," Fall 2010) with words that bring back vivid memories of my own immersion experience in El Salvador 13 years ago. I too remember being struck by those shards of glass and barbed wire atop the walls of San Salvador—and by the crude but effective way they separated the harsh realities of street life from the warm, generous hospitality that invariably awaited our group on the other side.

I look back at the 10 days I spent in El Salvador as the most formative time of my adult life. Although my initial plans to learn Spanish and be a serious scholar of Latin America never panned out (at least not yet), El Salvador did give me an abiding hunger to better understand the world, to challenge my own culture and position of relative privilege, and, most important, to lead a deliberate life (borrowing from Thoreau, and now Graver).

I am delighted to see that Boston College is still actively supporting and indeed expanding these cultural immersion trips, especially for the University's faculty and staff. Though certainly valuable for 19-year-old undergraduates, they have a lot to offer all members of the University community who are searching for professional, personal, and spiritual growth.

Adam Fuss '01
Naperville, Illinois

THE HABIT

"Rate of Change," by Mark Massa, SJ, in the Fall 2010 issue is an interesting though not complete history of the onset of the demise of traditional habits for religious women.

I have seen first hand the results of *Perfectae Caritatis*, having been employed for many years by a congregation of hospitable sisters. They were dramatic and unique

in their medieval garb. When they decided to modify their dress, an important part of their originality was lost. Now that congregation has not had a new member in over 20 years and is rapidly dying out. It seems to me that Holy Mother Church doesn't care.

Vito F. Tamboli '56
St. Louis, Missouri

THANK YOU, MOSES

Re "Urban Legend," by William Bole (Fall 2010): Whenever I think of Robert Moses what immediately pops into my mind is listening to a concert at Lincoln Center, or walking along the boardwalk at Jones Beach, or driving over the beautiful Robert Moses Causeway to relax on the pristine Fire Island beach at the state park named after him. One of Robert Moses's gifts to New Yorkers was to provide a haven for urbanites to get a much-needed break from the heat, crowds, and pressures of the city. It is through his insight that a bit of Long Island's magnificent beaches was preserved for all, not for the rich or developers.

Having said this, I was enlightened, and a bit saddened, when I read the article about Jane Jacobs and her fight with Moses. Although true, the story showed a rather deceitful side of the man who was called the "master builder of the 20th century." I wish that it had included some of the genius of Robert Moses, as well.

Michele Boccia, MA'99
New York, New York

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

Re "Bloom's Way," by Matthew Battles (Fall 2010): I was introduced to James Joyce's *Ulysses* as an undergraduate at Boston College under the tutelage of the remarkable Adele Dalsimer, and it challenged and captivated me like no other work of literature before or since. While Joyce may not have had much use for organized religion, it is impossible not to see him as a man and an artist imbued with spirituality.

His deep (some may say obsessive) love for Nora Barnacle is evidence that he saw the beauty and the power of that most divine gift—love. Joyce's work is ultimately a celebration of the artistic imagination and a testament to the resilience of the

human spirit. I can think of few themes more divine.

Joseph Moran '77
Glen Ridge, New Jersey

BOOK'S MARK

The Church in the 21st Century Center's The Catholic Intellectual Tradition: A Conversation at Boston College ("Core Curriculum," Fall 2010) is a small yet important booklet, an inspiration to further discussion. Thank you to its many contributors from across the University.

Jessica Lynn Salefski, MA'10
Belmont, Massachusetts

Editor's Note: In the Digest column of the Winter 2011 issue, it was reported that Dining Service's Jimmy Vo won \$1 million on a scratch ticket. What was not known at the time, and not reported, is that Mr. Vo is a 2008 graduate of Boston College's Woods College of Advancing Studies. Thanks to James McNamara '09 for pointing this out.

And this amplification regarding the licensing of Solasta technology to South China Normal University ("Solasta, Chapter One," Winter 2011): Because SCNU failed to meet the terms and obligations of its license, according to Catherine Ives, director of University technology transfer and licensing, its license was ended in June 2010. Says Ives, "Boston College retains the underlying patents to the nanocoax technology and continues to look for research and commercialization partners."

And, lastly, a correction: Due to an editing error, several letters in the Winter 2011 issue appeared with the wrong "signature." The letter titled "The bOp" was actually sent in by Adam Shulman '07 of Cos Cob, Connecticut, not Jim Scannell '69; the letter "Joyce's Way" was submitted by Patrick Walsh '82 of Quincy, Massachusetts, not Jim O'Brien '60; and the letter "Facing Family History" was written by George Comeaux '65 of North Easton, Massachusetts, not Tom Lloyd, Ph.D. '96. Apologies to all—with thanks for their enlightening contributions.

BCM welcomes letters from readers.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and must be signed to be published. Our fax number is (617) 552-2441; our e-mail address is bcm@bc.edu.

Lipden Lane

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CAMPUS DIGEST

Riding a robust platform titled "Building Community Through Programming, Outreach, Accessibility, and Formation," juniors Mike Kitlas and Jill Long were **elected president and vice president** of UGBC, shouldering aside candidates represented by "Think Big" and "Achieving our Capabilities." ✂ Twenty-one athletic teams had a perfect **Graduation Success Rate**, the largest number among Division I programs, according to the NCAA. ✂ **Patrolman Kevin Browne** was honored by the state's campus police organization for his role in treating a student struck by a hit-and-run driver in December 2009. ✂ Assistant professors Dunwei Wang, of chemistry, and Stephen Wilson, of physics, were awarded National Science Foundation "**career grants**"—highly regarded awards made to American junior faculty of particular promise. ✂ The \$1.5 billion **Light the World campaign** announced that it had achieved half its monetary goal. ✂ The University held a reception to honor the maintenance staff who, between December 21 and April 1, had cleared a cumulative eight feet of snow from campus roads, sidewalks, parking lots, staircases, and flat roofs. Some **1,600 tons of snow** were ultimately trucked to a "snowfield" on the Brighton Campus and shaped and pounded into sturdy little hills by front-end loaders. ✂ Students greeted Boston Marathon runners this year with an inflatable maroon and gold arch at the main entrance, on which was printed

"The Heartbreak Is Over," a reference to the University's position at the summit of "Heartbreak Hill"—just before runners begin their five-mile descent to the finish line in Boston. Nearly 300 Boston College students ran the marathon to gather contributions for the Campus School. In other **student philanthropic activity**, Boston College's fourth annual Relay for Life raised \$140,000 for cancer research, while 14 student participants in the seventh annual BC Idol competition raised \$3,600 in ticket sales to support a music program at St. Columbkille School, in Brighton, an elementary diocesan school that is managed in partnership with the University and the Lynch School. Patrick Kessock '13, who performed Lady Gaga's "Poker Face" solo while strumming the ukulele, would have received Digest's vote if Digest had been in Robsham Theater to vote. ✂ **Paul Daigneault '87**, the founder and artistic director of Boston's SpeakEasy Stage Company, was appointed Monan Professor in Theater Arts for the 2011–12 academic year. ✂ **Boston College will house archives** of the international commission that oversaw the process by which weapons used by Catholic and Protestant militant groups during "The Troubles" were destroyed. Under British and Irish law, those archives will be closed for 30 years. ✂ Khaled Anatolios, a member of the School of Theology and Ministry faculty, has been named one of seven **Luce scholars in theology** for



RHAPSODY IN BLUE—Boston's acclaimed Blue Heron Renaissance Choir was the artist-in-residence for the 2010–11 academic year. Specializing in 15th-century Franco-Flemish polyphony and neglected 16th-century English compositions, the choir held a series of concerts, open rehearsals, and workshops on campus. At a master class on March 29 in Lyons Hall, Blue Heron's director Scott Metcalfe (left) coached Robert Duggan '11 and the rest of the Boston College Madrigal Singers.  To see a video of Blue Heron's Scott Metcalfe with the Madrigal Singers, go to Full Story, www.bc.edu/bcm.

2011–12. Anatolios is a scholar of early Christianity. ✂ Urged on by students, Dining Services initiated “**Meatless Monday**” in Corcoran Commons this year, a program that joined “Eat on China Wednesday” and other programs for the month of March (Green Month) as part of the unit’s “sustainability” effort. Moved by similar sentiments, one supposes, the MBTA increased the number of three-car “trips” on the Green Line from 13 to 32 per day. ✂ Thornberrys and Rugrats danced the night away in O’Connell House during this year’s **Nickelodeon-themed** Middlemarch Ball. ✂ The most recent **U.S. News rankings** had to do with graduate programs and saw the Connell School of Nursing rise from 26 to 21 in the nation; the Lynch School of Education moving from 19 to 15; and the Law School moving

up one position to 27. Among A&S doctoral programs, economics landed at 31, and chemistry at 45. ✂ Trustees approved an operating budget of \$845 million for 2011–12. **Tuition** will be \$41,480. ✂ Two undergraduate students were among the Americans **flown out of Egypt** during unrest there in February. ✂ Three seniors founded the **Revolutionary Government of Boston College**—an RGBC to compete with the UGBC. Main item on the agenda: high cost of food in campus facilities. True to its name, the RGBC said it will not seek University recognition. ✂ Digest applauds the uncredited editor at the Boston College Police Department who has overthrown years of “Police Blotter” tradition by describing the proximate cause of residence hall smoke alarm alerts as “**burnt food**,” rather than “bad cook-

ing,” which, unfortunately, is neither easily detectable nor an interest of law enforcement. ✂ The University has received a \$1 million grant from the Keck Foundation for a group of physicists to develop a microscope that would use **nanotechnology to deliver clearer images**. Electron microscopes, said researcher Jonathan Rosenberg, allow viewers to distinguish materials separated by at least 200 nanometers (billionths of a meter). The project aims to reduce that distance to 20. ✂ The slim, white-haired **Adelaide (Addie) Lalli**, the best-known Dining Services staff member in living memory—and an individual immortalized like a billionaire donor in “The Loft @ Addie’s,” in Corcoran Commons—died on March 20, at age 88. She retired this year after 35 years on the Heights. —Ben Birnbaum



Franco (left) and Mariani, on the stage of the Robsham Theater

Screen test

By Dave Denison

An actor and an author in search of Hart Crane

Two years ago, Boston College University Professor of English Paul Mariani received a message from actor James Franco's agent. Franco, a rising star in Hollywood, wanted to talk about making a movie based on Mariani's 1999 biography, *The Broken Tower: The Life of Hart Crane*. Mariani passed the inquiry to his literary agent, who cautioned that such deals—"optioning" the movie rights to a story—rarely result in a finished film.

"I really didn't know much about James," Mariani recalls. He could have asked one of his students for details of Franco's career—from his role in the short-lived 1999 television series *Freaks and Geeks* to later work in three *Spider-Man* movies (2002, 2004, 2007), *Flyboys* (2006), and *Pineapple Express*, a 2008 comedy-adventure in which Franco co-stars with Seth Rogen.

Mariani arranged his own private Franco film festival. He watched Franco's portrayal of James Dean in a 2001 made-

for-television movie. He was impressed. "Then I saw a few of the other films, which I wasn't too excited about, you know, like *Spider-Man* and *Flyboys*. But the James Dean piece, I said, this guy's a real actor." And when he saw Franco's portrayal of the poet Allen Ginsberg in the 2010 movie *Howl*, he was sold. "I couldn't believe just how well James had Allen's voice down," he says. "He'd gotten the gestures, the mannerisms of a younger Ginsberg."

The agents continued to negotiate, but Mariani recalls thinking, "I'm going to do it anyway. I just trust this guy. I'm enjoying this."

CUT TO THE PRESENT: IT'S EARLY evening, Friday, April 15, and the University's Robsham Theater is packed with 500 students who won an online Boston College lottery for tickets to a preview of *The Broken Tower*, the film that Franco wrote in consultation with Mariani. (Franco also directed the 90-

minute movie and stars as Crane.) The lights dim slightly, and Franco enters through a side door. He waves, looking bemused, and the crowd erupts in applause.

He's wearing jeans, a leather jacket over his untucked plaid shirt, and white leather shoes. He joins Mariani on stage, and they give brief introductions to the film, which, according to Franco, is not quite, but nearly, completed. Mariani notes that Crane's poetry was famously dense and difficult. Franco says, "I warn you, this is not *Pineapple Express*."

That turns out to be the understatement of the event. Shot in black-and-white, the slow-paced movie includes one especially long scene (10 minutes) of Crane reading a poem to an uncomprehending on-screen audience. And there is no Hollywood ending. Crane, born in 1899, was the son of a prosperous Cleveland businessman who had no patience for his son's desire to be a poet. His parents' marriage was miserable and operatic, and Crane first left Ohio when he was 17, as the marriage was ending. He struggled as a writer, leading a peripatetic life plagued by alcoholism and volatile homosexual relationships. In 1932, at age 32, he committed suicide by jumping off a steamship during a return trip to New York from Mexico.

WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME UP, FRANCO and Mariani took questions from the audience. One student, a young man in glasses, asked each to talk about "how you first came across Crane's poetry and why it spoke to you."

Mariani, who has written biographies of other poets—Robert Lowell, William Carlos Williams, John Berryman, and, most recently, Gerard Manley Hopkins—said he started reading Crane's work about 40 years ago "and was puzzled by it, I think like most people, but also drawn to it. And I noticed as I spoke to different poets that they all went through a phase with Hart Crane. There was a period when they were obsessed, or deeply absorbed, by the figure and the poetry of Hart Crane."

Franco told of being on a set in New Orleans about seven years ago. "I was reading all the time—compensating

for not finishing my English degree at UCLA.... I started reading Harold Bloom.... And Bloom said in the introduction to [a collection of Crane's] poems that you'll better understand them if you read Paul Mariani's book." While Franco was studying film directing at New York University in 2009, he decided to make a movie about the poet.

Soon afterward, Mariani met Franco in New York. They walked around Greenwich Village and Brooklyn, the professor pointing out places where Crane had lived and worked. Crane's most famous poem is *The Bridge*, a book-length work inspired by his view of the Brooklyn Bridge from an apartment near the East River, and as they walked across the bridge, Mariani looked up at the cables and said, "Look at the way the wires cross. Those are 'the choiring strings' Hart Crane talks about." Over the next year, and into the fall of 2010, when filming began, Mariani provided Franco with additional research on period details. Mariani even had a cameo role in the movie, portraying the photographer Alfred Stieglitz.

Questions from several students elicited from Franco the range of influences on his filmmaking. The two movies he had in mind while making *The Broken Tower*, he said, were *My Life to Live* (1962) by Jean Luc Godard, and *I Am Cuba*, by Mikhail Kalatozov, a low-budget but lush 1964 film shot on location with handheld cameras.

Citing the many scenes in his film where Crane is shown simply walking, Franco said, "The idea was to be in his space and move with him and make it feel both intense and also opaque at times, because that is what his poetry is like." Crane himself once admitted in an essay that his poetry was difficult, Franco said, noting that the poet had asserted, "I'm writing in a certain way so that people will be reading in a different way."

"My hope," said Franco, "is maybe you experience the movie in a slightly different way because of the way it's presented."

THE FINAL QUESTION WAS POSED BY Morgan Healey '13. Observing that Crane had struggled to find an "affirmative" vision for his art, she asked Franco, "What

are those modern-day affirmations for you?"

Franco said he thinks about "what art is for." "One of the main things it can do is bring people together with a deep understanding, and really tell us who we are, how we live, and what we're doing."

Asked later for her reaction to the film, Healey said she admired the way Franco combined the artfulness of black-and-white filmmaking with Crane's poetic craft. "It's like art, twofold," she said.

Sean Meehan '11 had a similar impression. "I think it's a visual tone poem," he said. "It's evocative of that kind of abstract poetry."

Riley Madincea '11 was struck by how much interest Franco's celebrity generated. Considering the crowd of 500 (approximately 2,000 students had entered the lottery for tickets), he said, "maybe 90 percent of them were here just to see James Franco. Whatever—he exposes people to arts or events they wouldn't usually go to. I think that's a great initiative. If it takes A-list celebrities to do that, it takes A-list celebrities."

Indeed, Franco was immediately surrounded by a crush of students as he left

the stage. He patiently signed autographs and posed for cell phone photos for more than 20 minutes. Franco and Mariani eventually made their way to the Hillside Café, where they joined a couple of dozen faculty members and other invitees at a celebratory reception.

Mariani is currently at work on a biography of the poet Wallace Stevens. Franco, who is pursuing a Ph.D. in English at Yale, was asked about his next projects. He mentioned a "prequel" to *The Wizard of Oz*, and a film adaptation of Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. With the lives of Allen Ginsberg and Hart Crane brought to film, Franco was asked, why not Walt Whitman? "The thing about Hart Crane is, he had a very dramatic life and that works for cinema a little better," he said. He paused. "But I'm working on Whitman." How so? "I've been studying him. I've studied Whitman with Michael Warner at Yale. So he's on my mind, yeah." ■

Dave Denison is a Boston-based writer.



View the post-screening Q&A with James Franco and Paul Mariani at Full Story, www.bc.edu/bcm.



Mariani (far left) and Franco (center), in Robsham following the Q&A



A Manager's Guide to Harnessing Technology, in a choice of formats

Textbook 2.0

By Alicia Potter

John Gallagher adopts rapid response publishing

John Gallagher is a professor of information systems in Boston College's Carroll School of Management, and he teaches on subjects such as social media, the software industry, and online marketing. The classic textbook in his field is *Corporate Information Strategy and Management: Text and Cases*, a 528-page, 1.8-pound volume that sells for \$195. First published in 1996, it is now in its eighth edition. Gallagher stopped assigning it in 1997.

"Overwhelmingly, the feedback from students was that it read like an encyclopedia," he says.

Instead, Gallagher began using a mix of materials: articles from the popular business press and case studies he'd written that he distributed to his class almost exclusively online at his website Gallagher.com. In the course of his research he examined a growing trend in pedagogical publishing: the electronic textbook. Digital and downloadable, this alter-

native to "dead-tree" printing is capable of delivering information that is fresh, easily accessible, and inexpensive.

IN SPRING 2007, GALLAGHER WAS approached by the founders of Flat World Knowledge, an online publisher of "remixable textbooks" based in Irvington, New York. They had seen the class materials posted on his website and proposed that he create a book. In Flat World's business model, Gallagher recognized a strategy that not only cut deeply into production and overhead costs for the publisher but also scaled down the long lead times that plague authors of traditional paper-and-ink books.

He started writing in fall 2007. He completed a manuscript 18 months later and spent another six weeks working with the editorial staff at Flat World on revisions. Throughout the process, he was able to post in-progress chapters on his website and make use of reader feedback

(from spelling corrections to suggestions of web links), while updating numbers and examples. He continued adding new content in the months prior to the title's formal launch.

Information Systems: A Manager's Guide to Harnessing Technology was published officially in July 2010. The 326-page book is available in various formats, all of which incorporate the layout of a traditional textbook. Students can view it free online at Flat World's website. They also can purchase the title as an e-book to read on a tablet device or as a PDF to view on a computer screen and print out at home (printing directly from the website, however, eliminates much of the book's formatting). According to Gallagher, most of his students purchase the title as a black-and-white, soft-cover volume that looks just like any other textbook. Flat World prints these copies on demand at independent printers around the country, shipping the finished product directly to students or to outlets that make purchases in bulk.

At \$25 for an e-book to \$36 for a soft-cover color copy, *Information Systems* costs a fraction of the tome Gallagher used to assign to his classes. With colleges and universities scrambling to contain textbook costs in response to provisions of the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act (which requires them to supply textbook prices with their course schedules and requires publishers to brief faculty on edition changes and price options), and with publishers trying to bolster bottom lines, e-textbooks are an increasingly attractive option. Media industry forecaster Simba Information projects the market will grow at a rate of nearly 50 percent during the next three years. Accordingly, leading educational publishers such as McGraw-Hill and Prentice Hall have debuted e-textbooks for Amazon's Kindle and Apple's iPad. Flat World intends to boost its catalogue from 41 titles to 60 by spring of 2012 and, in the next few years, to publish textbooks for the 125 college courses with the highest-enrollments.

GALLAGHER HAS BEEN INSTRUCTING on information systems for 14 years. He writes "The Week in Geek," a blog digest of news about "the intersection of business and technology." And he was an early

adopter of Twitter, wikis, and podcasts as teaching tools. (He was also the first Boston College professor to offer all of his lectures as MP3 downloads.) But what most excites him about the online book format is not the technology—it's the creative freedom.

"There was no pressure to have a section on this or a chapter on that in order to sell more copies to a network of state universities or community colleges," he says. "This was my product, as opposed to something shaped and designed by committee. I own the copyright."

Case studies in his book focus on companies with high student appeal—Zara (the Spanish fast-fashion chain), Netflix, Facebook, Google—and are presented in a conversational tone. Hyperlinks and YouTube clips supplement the content.

"I tried to write in a voice that you'd find in *BusinessWeek* or *Wired*," Gallagher says, "to convey enthusiasm yet not [sacrifice] serious concepts."

After Flat World uploaded a beta version of the textbook in fall 2009, Gallagher found that within 48 hours readers on every continent except Antarctica had visited the site, with many visitors downloading material. E-mails praising the text began arriving from as far away as Saudi Arabia and New Zealand.

Today, *Information Systems* is being used by more than 130 professors, at schools ranging from Carnegie Mellon University to the University of Maryland to New York University. Not a week goes by without Gallagher hearing from students, faculty, or business practitioners who have discovered the text in Vietnam, say, or Bolivia or Kenya. Some professors are customizing it for their courses, as Flat World permits, deleting chapters, rearranging sections, and adding their own notes and multimedia.

THE NEW FORMAT IS NOT WITHOUT drawbacks or detractors. Electronic textbooks aren't as easy to highlight or bookmark as their print counterparts, and they can be hard to read on the small screens of laptops and tablet devices, prompting some educators to fret that chapters will ultimately become shorter and their content simpler. Critics also complain that many e-textbook files "self-destruct"—

that they deny the user access to the downloaded file—after a set period of time, usually a semester or a year. (Gallagher's book does not.) And, already, there are e-textbooks with advertising.

Gallagher won't carry commercials. And even he says that studying a textbook online remains no match for flipping through actual pages. "There's a saying in publishing, 'You can't beat books for bandwidth,' and it's an accurate one," he says. "I have the iPad, and it's nice for reading articles or copying and pasting notes. But when it comes to the very different experience of consuming a textbook, you want to be able to highlight, mark up the margins, and find things quickly in class. I still don't think that the digitally delivered piece is best for that."

Its portability, however, is a big advantage. Gallagher points out that students can access his textbook on their iPhone while on the go, or travel home without lugging a heavy hardcover. (The book does not come bundled, though—students have to purchase formats individually.) Flat World sells audio versions and offers electronic companion study aids, such as flashcards and practice quizzes.

Gallagher says he's too much of a geek to imagine that in five years the con-

versation about digital learning will be the same. As tablet devices evolve, reading on a digital screen will become easier and cheaper. But technology development isn't his primary concern. Content is. If the material isn't stimulating and fresh, he maintains, students aren't going to embrace it, no matter what the format.

As a result, Gallagher is already revising his text. He's slashed copy about the flagging social network site MySpace and increased content about Twitter. He's added information about location-based services such as Foursquare. And he's expanded a section on how firms can create a "Social Media Awareness Response Team," based partly on research that he conducted with Boston College colleagues Robert Fichman and Jerry Kane and health care executive John Glaser (written up in the November 2009 *Harvard Business Review*). "To be able to update the material so regularly is really important," he says, adding "it's fun to deliver a product that has the potential to disrupt all the crazy forces that I study and teach." ■

Alicia Potter is a Boston-based writer.



Link to John Gallagher's e-textbook at Full Story, www.bc.edu/bcm.

Law school dean named

Vincent D. Rougeau, a professor of law at the University of Notre Dame, has been named the 11th dean of the Boston College Law School. A specialist on the role of moral and religious values in law and public policy, he is the author of *Christians in the American Empire: Faith and Citizenship in the New World Order* (2008). Rougeau, 47, earned a BA in international relations from Brown University and a law degree from Harvard Law School, where he helped found the *Harvard Human Rights Journal*. At Notre Dame, he taught courses in contracts, real estate law, and Catholic social thought for 12 years.

During that time he also served as the law school's dean for academic affairs and the director of the school's Center for Law and Government. In announcing Rougeau's appointment, University provost Cutberto Garza said Rougeau "understands the challenges the law profession is likely to face in the next 15 to 20 years. . . . New law graduates have to be prepared to understand the global nature of the world." Rougeau will assume his post July 1, replacing John Garvey, who left to become president of the Catholic University of America.

—Thomas Cooper





Jacquelyn Clancey '11, from the Connell School of Nursing, explains her research project "Assessing Biophysical Risk for Breast Cancer: Using the Gail Model with Older Women."

Notes from the field

By Jane Whitehead

Student researchers have their day

Having tackled questions from "Who is God?" to "Why are coyotes attacking humans," 60 undergraduates convened in Fulton Hall on February 4 to present their findings at Boston College's annual Undergraduate Research Symposium. The meetings, which for three hours occupied multiple rooms throughout the building, were first held in 2007, begun by Donald Hafner, vice president for academic affairs. Their purpose is two-fold: to give independent student researchers "the experience and the reward" of presenting their work to peers and faculty, and to encourage fellow undergraduates to "imagine realms of inquiry and achievement that they might take as their own," says Hafner.

More than half the participants had received Boston College Advanced Study Grants, which were developed in 1996 by Mark O'Connor, director of the University's Honors Program, to improve

the scholarship skills of potential candidates for postgraduate awards such as the Fulbright and Marshall fellowships. Fifty-two grants, ranging between \$500 and \$2,000, were awarded in 2010, triple the number in 2000.

Many of this year's presenters had also previously published accounts of their work in the University's undergraduate research journals (*Al-Noor*, *Dialogue*, *Elements*, and *Ethos*); and 10 percent were McNair Scholars, their investigations funded by a U.S. Department of Education program aimed at preparing low-income, first-generation students and members of other underrepresented groups for careers in academe. All of the University's undergraduate schools were represented, as were all classes, with 24 seniors, 26 juniors, nine sophomores, and one freshman.

"I DON'T LIKE TECHNOLOGY—THAT'S why I'm talking about the Middle Ages,"

joked Tedd Wimperis '11, unfazed as a computer glitch sidelined the PowerPoint portion of his talk, *Ars Scribendi, Ars Edendi* ("The Art of Writing, The Art of Editing"), one of five presentations at the panel titled "Ancient Cultures, Modern Questions." For two years, the classics major had been studying medieval Latin narrative poetry from the Third Crusade (1189–92), buttressing his work in Latin with secondary sources in German, Italian, and French. He spent the summer of 2009 shuttling between his home in Connecticut and Boston College's O'Neill and Theology and Ministry libraries as he prepared a translation of *De Expugnata Accone* ("The Conquest of Acre"), a little-known 896-verse chronicle of the siege of the Muslim city of Acre, in what is now northern Israel, purportedly written by Monachus of Florence, the patriarch of Jerusalem. Wimperis continued his translation of neglected 12th-century poems in the summer of 2010, drawn, he said, by "the thrill of the detective work" and the chance to bring to light "texts which have been in darkness for so long."

Fellow panelist Adam Gross '12 ("Funerary Archeology: The Importance of the Necropolis of Sanisera") spent the summer of 2010 on a 10-person team excavating a burial site dating from the fifth to the seventh century A.D. on the Spanish island of Menorca. Gross described using pickaxes, shovels, and hoes to clear the rocky scrub and unearth the tombs before turning to wooden kebab skewers and Popsicle sticks to tease out bone fragments.

Han Cho '11 undertook a different sort of exploration, a look at her own identity as an Asian-American woman—"two different worlds joined by a single hyphen," as she said. In her presentation for the panel on "The Arts in Many Forms," the theater major described taking classes at the International Dance Academy of Hollywood and at Improv Olympic West in Los Angeles to learn techniques for performance art. These studies helped her incorporate gesture, dance, music, and words into her storytelling, Cho said. The end product was a 40-minute solo performance, *Hyphen'D-Girl*, performed at the Bonn Studio in the Robsham Theater Arts Center on December 4, 2010. Cho hoped

the piece would resonate with women of color, but she discovered that others, including men, responded to her themes of family pressure, self-perception, and society's presumptions.

On the panel "Politics—Global and Local," senior Christina Kim described her study, during the summer of 2010, of attitudes toward trial by jury in two countries new to the process—Korea, which introduced limited jury trials in 2008, and Japan, which made similar changes in 2009. Kim, a political science major who plans to attend law school, devoted most of her study to the Korean example, owing to her familiarity with the language. She researched that country's legal system on site, in the libraries of Seoul National University and Korea University and through interviews with Korean lawyers and academics. She learned that initially many of these professionals were alarmed at the government's plan for lay participation in the courtroom—some comparing it to asking amateurs to perform surgery. But following Korea's adoption of what is by U.S. standards modest citizen involvement—a judge can overrule a jury's verdict, for instance—Kim said there is growing acceptance among all Koreans that jury service "provides a sense of meaningful civic participation." To an extent that surprised her, Kim said, both Korea and Japan, "however Westernized they are becoming, have traditions, histories, and cultures that make adopting Western processes . . . difficult, or impossible." She added: "I liked that my preconceived notions were challenged."

The 12 panels, from "Science and Technology at the Edge" to "Healthcare Challenges" to "Issues in Education," were joined by seven student poster presentations, ranging from "The Nutritional Status of Three-to-Five-Year-Olds in Rural Jamaica" (Kathryn Boyle '11) to "Mathematics Behind Cryptology: The Study of Cryptographic Algorithms, Quantum Computing, and the Class NP" (Tair Akhmetjanov '12). When the last of the sessions ended, at 4:00 p.m., presenters, faculty, and students from the audiences gathered at a reception in the Fulton Honors Library, where conversations and questions continued.

Donald Hafner noted that the Under-

graduate Research Symposium "has proven contagious," with several departments, including psychology and biology, holding poster sessions for seniors toward the end of the spring semester. Honors Program director O'Connor sees this expansion as the most important outcome of the meetings. "After only a few years the symposium is no longer novel," he says. "Boston College undergraduates increasingly want

to put themselves at the front edge of learning, because they've come to assume that's the only place to be." ■

Jane Whitehead is a Boston-based writer.



View "Findings," an audio slideshow of selected presentations from the Undergraduate Research Symposium, at Full Story, www.bc.edu/bcm.

Have at it

By William Bole

Partisanship is good for us

A panel discussion on March 2 in the Murray Room posed the question, "Is Partisanship a Bad Thing?" to which most people and certainly most pundits would reply straightaway, "Yes." The three political scientists who spoke at the late-afternoon forum sponsored by the Clough Center for the Study of Constitutional Democracy offered an equally swift answer to that question, but a less conventional one. "No," said political scientist R. Shep Melnick of Boston College, flat out at the start of his opening remarks.

Melnick went to another level of political incorrectness by quoting, with one substituted word, a portion of the memorable "greed is good" speech delivered by antagonist Gordon Gekko in the 1987 movie *Wall Street*. "Partisanship, for lack of a better word, is good. Partisanship is right. Partisanship clarifies, it cuts through, and it captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit."

The speakers who followed—Harvard University's Nancy Rosenblum and Dartmouth College's Russell Muirhead—also departed from what Melnick had declaimed as the "mealy-mouthed, pussy-footing academic" way of neutrally dissecting differing positions and arguments. They too paid homage to the factional life. By forum's end they were agreeing

that recent hailstorms of partisanship, including the embroilments in Wisconsin between a Republican governor and pro-labor Democrats, were salutary overall. It would be good if the lines were drawn as sharply between the parties on some other questions, they submitted to their not entirely persuaded audience of nearly 50 students and faculty members.

In the background of this discussion were dueling traditions of thought represented by political *philosophy*, on the one hand, and political *science*, on the other.

Political philosophers dating to Aristotle have held that factionalism and political alignments (in a word, parties) are anathema to public harmony and the social good. Such was the thinking of America's Founding Fathers, including Thomas Jefferson, who once wrote that if he could get to heaven only by going with a political party, "I would not go there at all," as Melnick related. Political science, as an empirical discipline that took notable shape in the early 19th century, has looked more soberly upon political realities. The view from this field has been that strong parties and lively partisanship are necessary if not noble, essential to the workings of a pluralistic, representative democracy.

Reeling off what he sees as the virtues of such alignments, Melnick, the Thomas

P. O'Neill, Jr., Professor of American Politics (and author of *Between the Lines: Interpreting Welfare Rights*, 1994), argued: "Parties aggregate interests, they articulate interests, they form governments, they create majorities capable of governing, they recruit and socialize leaders, they promote stability, they offer choices, they inhibit demagoguery, and they create barriers to elective tyranny."

Complicating matters, many members of Melnick's own discipline have lately expressed their distaste for the growing polarization of American politics and the dearth of bipartisanship. Those, however, are fairly new laments, Melnick noted. In times past, pundits and academics alike were in fact displeased with the ideologically indistinct quality of the two major parties, each of which, for example, was at one time hospitable to both northern liberals and southern segregationists. The parties didn't offer Americans a real choice at the polling booth, critics complained. "Finally in the 1990s, we got what most political scientists had long demanded—and they were aghast," Melnick related, alluding to fractious debates during the Clinton administration. "Apparently there is no way to please the chattering class."

Following Melnick's rebuke of bipartisanship (those who consider themselves above the fray should "jump off the fence and get off your high horse," he intoned), Muirhead, the author of *Just Work* (2004), asked for a show of hands on whether partisanship is such a bad thing. Understandably, a number of lecture-goers looked warily around the Murray Room, hands half-raised in opposition to factionalism. The poll was inconclusive.

Muirhead proceeded to critique what he sees as the shibboleths of nonpartisanship, dictums including "Vote for the person, not the party," and "Better to be patriotic than partisan." Such sentiments do not produce strong outcomes such as health care reform—or successful opposition to health care reform—which normally involve galvanizing partisan forces on one side or the other. "To accomplish something in politics, you have to win in the face of opposition," he stressed.

Both Muirhead and Rosenblum, whose book *On the Side of the Angels: An Appreciation of Parties and Partisanship*

appeared in 2008, took special aim at the most sought-after voters—Independents. These swing voters are acting on the deeply rooted American ideals of self-reliance and free agency, Rosenblum pointed out, but they are far less likely than others to participate in politics, to vote or volunteer for candidates. That was her benign assessment. Rosenblum also described the Independent position as a form of "degraded citizenship," in which those professing it not only participate less but also hold views that are "chaotic and ad hoc." For good measure she referred to the "weightlessness of Independence."

Applications to real-life politics and current affairs came primarily during the Q&A, and particularly in response to questions from two undergraduates sitting next to each other in the second row.

James Sasso '12, a double major in history and political science, said that Democrats and Republicans often aren't even talking to each other, as in Wisconsin where 14 Democratic lawmakers fled the state in mid-February, in an ultimately failed effort to deprive the governor and Republican-controlled legislature of the quorum needed for a vote on anti-union legislation. "Is that a good thing?" Sasso asked skeptically, noting the

widespread impression of havoc in the statehouse. Yes, according to the panelists. Muirhead welcomed a "real debate" nationally about organized labor, while Rosenblum called for starker choices between Democrats and Republicans on other issues (Afghanistan being one). Sasso remained unconvinced, telling a reporter that the Wisconsin standoff went "beyond partisanship."

Christina Spiliakos '13, a political science major, voiced concern about a perceived trend toward Supreme Court justices voting strictly along Republican or Democratic lines. On this point the panelists agreed: "Partisanship is a bad thing for the judiciary," Rosenblum allowed.

For all the paeans otherwise to partisanship, each presentation was unmistakably nonpartisan. There seemed to be no way of locating panelists on any particular point of the ideological spectrum, except perhaps the broad middle. After the forum, most audience members continued the conversation with speakers or one another, discussing issues mannerly, without evidence of factional strife. ■



The complete colloquy "Is Partisanship a Bad Thing?" may be viewed at Full Story via www.bc.edu/bcm

Social network

By William Bole

For graduate students, a time and place to consider religion and culture

I nside Boston College's Murray Graduate Student Union, which occupies a large Tudor Revival on Hammond Street, a group of graduate students is assembling in the front parlor room. Above the fireplace hangs a portrait of the building's namesake, John Courtney Murray, SJ, as illustrated on the cover of *Time* magazine on December 12, 1960 (back when theological ideas were dis-

cussed more readily in the secular media). After being effectively silenced by the Holy See during the 1950s for his writings on religious liberty, Murray would emerge at the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) as a leading theological architect of the Catholic Church's opening to the modern world.

Periodically, the portrait is moved elsewhere—to make room, say, for Christmas

decorations—but Murray (if not always his likeness) serves to inspire members of a loose-knit community that for nearly three years has materialized every month or so for discussion over pizza about what the Catholic intellectual tradition has to say to them as graduate students at Boston College. They call themselves the Murray Circle.

Like Murray, the student-run group is principally concerned with social questions, with “the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time,” in the soaring words of the Vatican II declaration *Gaudium et Spes*. Topics of discussion are announced in advance of the colloquies, and the organizers have a penchant for choosing timely ones. For instance, four days after Black Friday—which launches the Christmas shopping season on the heels of Thanksgiving—and one day after the online shopping promotion known as Cyber Monday, the students came together to consider consumerism.

The dinnertime gathering on November 30 drew nine students, a fairly typical showing, although as many as 15 have crowded the room for some other Murray Circle confabs, squeezing into billowy sofas and chairs around a coffee table

blanketed with pizza boxes. Doctoral students from the theology department on the main campus, and master’s students from the School of Theology and Ministry (STM) on the Brighton Campus, were preponderant, although typically other disciplines are represented—philosophy, social work, political science, to name some.

Each meeting begins with prayer, usually led by Kevin Ahern, a theology doctoral student who founded the Murray Circle after serving four years as president of the Paris-based International Movement of Catholic Students, which encourages the formation of small reflection groups such as this one. A brief presentation follows, on this occasion given by Seth Wispelwey, who is in his last semester of pastoral ministry studies at STM, and who glanced at notes on a laptop displaying a “Make Trade Fair” bumper sticker on the lid.

Wispelwey, who has been an organizer for faith-based social action groups and plans to resume this work after earning his master’s degree, targeted first the glibness of a slogan that lately could be found emblazoned on car magnets and decals, button pins and canvas tote bags. “You can’t just say, ‘Keep Christ in Christmas,’”

he began. There are “deeper forces” that can grind down the spiritual essence of Advent, consumerism being the ultimate grinder, he suggested.

This is a subject known to evoke hand-wringing and dark pronouncements, and there was a little of that, particularly when a young man, working on a slice of pizza laden with toppings, declared, “We’re decimating the earth” as a result of overconsumption, and a young woman with dangling earrings added, “I wonder if we’re devolving” as a species. The dourness, however, was more than offset by admission of the unavoidable ironies. “Advent is about waiting for a gift to come rather than seeking [acquisition] on Cyber Monday,” noted Wispelwey, who added with a chuckle—“although there were some sweet DVD deals yesterday.” And, while recommending the *Better World Handbook*, an activist guide that includes a catalogue of products friendly to workers and the environment, he also asked: “How about the people who could only afford to shop at Wal-Mart?”

The group’s leader, Ahern, who received his bachelor’s in religious studies from Fordham University in 2003 and would like to eventually combine his theological training with social-justice advocacy, will frequently interject to impart Murray’s hearty theological sensibility, his desire for a sympathetic dialogue with secular culture. Just as often, Ahern will nudge the conversation closer to home, as he did when the consumerism question flowed naturally into environmental considerations, asking, “How would we take these issues back to our experience of Boston College?” Then, conversation ensued about the need to provide more and better water fountains around campus, as an alternative to environmentally dubious bottled water.

A few years ago, Ahern felt a lack of such interchange among graduate students at Boston College, so he walked over to Murray House to talk to Joy Galarneau, now associate director of the Office of Graduate Student Life. In addition to her duties there, Galarneau was wrapping up a Ph.D. in systematic theology at Fordham at the time, and had, as she puts it, “rescued Murray” while rummaging through the Hammond Street



In Murray House’s front parlor on March 23 are (clockwise from left) Katie Sellers ’09 (back to camera); Beth Glauber ’03, a pastoral ministry and social work master’s student; Kevin Ahern; and Becky Camacho ’07, a master’s student in divinity.

building's basement, where she discovered the framed reproduction of the *Time* cover. Galarneau quickly secured modest funding for a graduate student discussion group (enough to provide refreshments and leaflets for promoting events) as well as a place to meet, agreeing there was a need for more conversational "spaces" to draw together graduate and professional students from different schools and departments, especially for discourse "at the heart of the Catholic intellectual and social traditions," she recalls. The Murray Circle met for the first time in September 2008; there have been 20 gatherings altogether, linking faith to social challenges ranging from human trafficking and Christian-Muslim relations to domestic violence and solidarity between students and campus cafeteria workers.

Theology doctoral student Katie Grimes points out that graduate students everywhere are a notoriously fragmented set, tucked away in their own disciplines. She seeks a wider community in the Murray Circle. "I've had conversations here I would never have otherwise," she says, citing exchanges with a non-Christian political science student from China who has turned up a few times (and chose not to be named in this article).

Grimes, who plans a career in academe, led a lunchtime discussion just before the midterm elections last November, on the theme of "faithful citizenship" with special application to the immigration debates. She started off with a short video documentary, *One Border, One Body*, which highlights an annual Mass joined on either side of the 16-foot fence that separates the United States and Mexico in rugged desert, commemorating those who have died while attempting to immigrate.

Afterward, Grimes floated the question: "What is more real? Our discipleship or our citizenship?" There was talk of tension between the two, between welcoming the stranger as a member of the body of Christ (discipleship) and asserting national identity over and against the stranger (citizenship).

Members of the circle say they find support and encouragement in its company, but they also throw down challenges—to one another and to the Catholic

social tradition. During a February event titled "Is Government Good?" theology doctoral student Michael Jaycox was lucidly reviewing Catholic social principles such as human rights and the common good (which must be fostered by government), when Katie Sellers '09, who is completing her master of theological studies at STM, noted that there were no women on the long list of references compiled by Jaycox.

"Just to be clear—I didn't exclude women from the list on purpose," Jaycox said with a slightly embarrassed look as everyone laughed. "I'm sure you didn't," Sellers smiled.

Her point was that a tradition formed primarily by men will speak primarily to male concerns, but Jaycox pressed her to be specific. Which aspects of Catholic social teaching are invalid? he asked in a friendly though provocative way. "Are you arguing against human rights?" No, said Sellers. "I'm talking about"—she opened her arms—"broadening human rights." In her view, the social teaching would

be different, more concrete, if women were notably at the ecclesiastical table, articulating tangible issues of immediate concern to mothers and children, such as the right to safe drinking water. And this example took the graduate students into another surge of dialogue about the missing ecological component of most official Catholic social teaching. "You can't talk about human well-being without talking about creation," argued Sellers, who would like to do work that somehow blends faith commitment with environmental activism.

With organizations such as Boston College's Church in the 21st Century Center and the National Catholic Student Coalition, the Murray Circle has also sponsored a couple of daylong conferences open to the public, including one last July on the task of putting Catholic social teaching into action. But Ahern says the group will continue the small-is-beautiful approach, gathering students around a coffee table for an hour or two and leaving the rest to them. ■

Search engine

By Tim Czerwiński

Carroll School dean and author Andy Boynton on finding and tending the good ideas

According to Andy Boynton, dean of the Carroll School of Management, great ideas rarely spring forth from the mind of a lone, creative genius. More often, they come from individuals or teams who know how to find and implement ideas existing all around them. The search for great ideas is the theme of Boynton's new book, *The Idea Hunter: How to Find the Best Ideas and Make Them Happen* (2011), co-written with Bill Fischer, a professor at the IMD business school in Switzerland, and William Bole, BCM's contributing writer.

On March 28, over lunch in a snug

conference room in Fulton Hall, Boynton discussed *The Idea Hunter* with a select group of Boston College administrators, some two dozen alumni of the University's Management Development Program, an initiative that invites middle managers to learn more about the University's administration from senior officials. It was the third meeting at which they would plumb the book.

Boynton opened the session by showing a video, a 1999 *Nightline* segment about the Silicon Valley product design firm IDEO. *Nightline's* producers had challenged IDEO to come up with an innova-



From left, Paul Cappadona, manager of transportation and parking; Carol Pepin, associate director for data management, institutional research; and Andy Boynton.

tive design for a shopping cart within five days. Cameras followed IDEO's eclectic team of MBAs, linguists, psychologists, and marketing experts as they went through a seemingly disordered, fast-paced process of tossing out ideas, consulting with specialists, and jerry-rigging prototypes.

"I look at that [video] as the DNA for what a lot of the book is about," said Boynton. "What are your thoughts? What did you see here?"

"At first it seemed chaotic, especially coming from academia where, at our meetings, there wouldn't be that kind of chaos," said Mary Ellen Fulton, associate dean for finance, research, and administration at the Lynch School of Education. "But the chaos quickly came to order."

"Any other observations?" Boynton prodded.

"The short, intense timeframe kept the ideas flowing. It wasn't 'Well, we'll talk about this over two weeks,'" observed Norah Wylie, dean for students at Boston College Law School. In the *Nightline* clip, the IDEO team sometimes worked nine straight hours on the shopping cart problem, in order to come up with ideas such as nested modular baskets and an on-board radio that would allow shoppers to communicate with supermarket staff.

"It wasn't an hour-long meeting here or there," agreed Boynton. "It was ba-boom ba-boom ba-boom."

John Feudo, associate vice president for alumni relations, commented on the composition of the design group. "If I'm asked to put a group together to design a new shopping cart," he said, "I'm going to get a couple engineers, a couple store managers, and then a handful of moms."

"Well, what does that say, then?" Boynton asked.

"That ideas can come from anywhere," said Feudo.

"They do," said Boynton. "And if you're trying to solve a problem, what's the most important thing? It's knowing how to work with the ideas in a way that comes up with an interesting solution, rather than expertise on the ideas."

AFTER SOME MORE DISCUSSION OF IDEO's shopping cart, Boynton introduced a second clip. "Does anyone know who Doug Engelbart is?" Boynton asked, allowing the group to collectively shrug for a moment before playing the video, a black and white guide to a 1968 technology exhibition. In it, Engelbart, an early computer scientist, middle-aged and wearing a white shirt and tie, drones uncomfortably before the camera. With

little evident star power, he demonstrates innovations developed in his lab at the Stanford Research Institute, including the mouse, word processing, video conferencing, and windows—in short, many of the technologies that a decade and a half later would make the personal computer revolution possible.

"Reactions?" Boynton asked.

"I was thinking it was boring," said Laurie Simard, contract manager for procurement services.

"Right," said Boynton. "It's not triable. It's not compatible with anything. There's no sense of being able to use [the technology] in a practical way. And so it fell flat. Xerox eventually picked it up, but no one remembers Doug Engelbart. He never made any money off these ideas."

The lesson? "We might have great ideas," Boynton said. "Let's not make them boring."

THE IDEA HUNTER ENDS WITH EXERCISES and a test, a self-administered diagnostic evaluation of the reader's proficiency in the book's principles. On this afternoon, Boynton closed the discussion by asking the group to reflect on what they'd learned, and how it could apply to their work at Boston College. Some respondents mentioned practical techniques, such as rapidly moving from idea to prototype, as demonstrated in the IDEO clip, or taking a productive hour each day to hunt for ideas.

Feudo touched on a paradox of success and the importance of fresh ideas. "After 22 years of doing this, maybe I'm feeling like all the ideas are out there already and there's nothing more to find," he said. "The book made me realize you have to pull outside people in and ask 'What do you think of what we do?'"

"We know our business, and that's a problem. We get into this cocoon of what we read, what we talk to, what we think is possible," Boynton said. Then he leaned forward. "We're all relatively successful at what we do. This book asks us to rethink our success formula." ■

The Idea Hunter: How to Find the Best Ideas and Make Them Happen may be ordered at a discount from the Boston College Bookstore via www.bc.edu/bcm.

Home truths

Three memoirists of the family, on why and how
they came to tell their difficult stories

EDITOR'S NOTE:

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VER THE PAST TWO DECADES, memoir has become as significant an American literary form as the novel has been, challenging fiction for supremacy on the bestseller lists, in the awarding of literary prizes, and for Hollywood's affection. Memoir is not, of course, a new art form. As a literary genre, memoir (or autobiography, to use the decorous name memoir lived under when it was still the consort of retired statesmen and naval heroes) has a history stretching back to Augustine, who wanted to map out a conversion narrative for the benefit of other sinners, and stretching forward to Greg Mortenson, the author of the best-selling and at present disputed *Three Cups of Tea*, whose authorial motives, as of this writing, are difficult to know with the exception, it would appear, of a desire to be renowned and wealthy. Of all the myriad subjects that memoir currently celebrates—politics, war, addiction, dog ownership—one of the more popular, as well as perilous for the writer, is family. On March 23, BCM sponsored a public forum on memoir writing that brought together Amy Boesky and Suzanne Berne, two members of the faculty who have recently published highly regarded family chronicles, and Joan Wickersham, a Boston-area writer whose recent memoir was nominated for a National Book Award. The following essays are edited from their remarks.

She's Gone: *Missing Lucile*

*M*EMOIRISTS ARE DRAWN to what they don't understand. We all have events that happened in the past that are still confusing, that haunt us; but at some point the memoirist—usually for pressing reasons of her own—decides it's time to write about them.

I wanted to write about a ghost in my family. My father lost his mother, Lucile, when he was six years old, and being motherless became the central fact of his life—responsible, he felt, for the marriages that didn't work, the profession he couldn't settle on, the places he couldn't decide whether or not to live in, his difficulties with his own children.

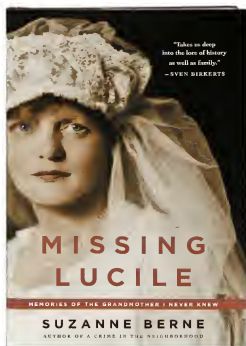
The story we were told was that he and his brother were sent to stay with relatives as Lucile was dying. A few days after she was buried, his father came to collect them, and all he told his sons was: "She's gone." Every time he recounted this story my father would say, the outrage in his voice still fresh and immediate, "They said she was gone. No one ever said where."

Even as a child, I wanted to give his mother back to him. I had a mother myself, and I found it awful that he didn't have one as well. What would my father have been like if he'd had a mother? I wondered. What would *I* have been like if he'd had a mother?

About six years ago, my father was diagnosed with lung cancer. I remember sitting with him one day and hearing him say, as he so often did, that he had never had a mother. And I thought: you *did* have a mother; you just don't know who she was. Because for all of his preoccupation with her, my father had never tried to learn about Lucile. In fact, when my grandfather died, he left an attic stuffed with family memorabilia, and my father threw everything away: diaries, letters, school papers.

Or almost everything. I was 12 years old, and before we left my grandfather's house I filled a small box with trinkets from the attic myself—all things, it turned out, that had belonged to my grandmother.

I had that box when I began writing this book. I also had some photographs, a letter Lucile had written, a few pages of a diary. Can you reconstruct somebody's life from a few facts and artifacts? I kept asking. How much do you *have* to know? As a novelist, I considered writing a novel about



Lucile. But this woman was already fiction, and to fictionalize her yet again seemed an aesthetic and personal mistake. She had once been as alive as I was, full of ambition, frustration, and desire; full of her own history. And I wanted that history. Memoir, the writer Patricia Hampl says, is "the intersection of narration and reflection, of storytelling and essay writing." As a flexible narrative form, memoir allowed me to keep changing the terms of engagement while I struggled to write about a real woman whom I knew I would never really know.

Unlike many other memoirists, I began this book without worrying that it would upset my family. But I was wrong. Although no one but some elderly cousins of my father even remembered having met Lucile, I was still writing about family history, and for my own purposes. I was telling the story of who we were: my version. One of my sisters said to me one day, "I feel like Lucile has become *your* grandmother." It was true, of course, because whatever you write is your creation, partly a projection of yourself. And whether or not anyone in the family has any interest in defining the past, the fact is that you have hijacked it, you will publish what's going to seem like the definitive version, and a memoir writer has got to be prepared for the consequences of claiming a piece of family history as her own.

—Suzanne Berne

Afterthoughts: *The Suicide Index*

MY FATHER SHOT HIMSELF in 1991. Every suicide is a mystery. You're constantly wrestling with why, why, why. The way I work out my why is to write. I thought: I'm going to write a novel about a father's suicide, what led up to it, and the impact on his family.

It took me years to get started because the subject was so painful, and once I got started I spent eight years, on and off, doing all of the things novelists do when they don't know what they're doing. I did a third person novel. I did a first person novel. I did a chronological novel. I did a chronological novel with flashbacks. But always the fiction felt thin, remote.

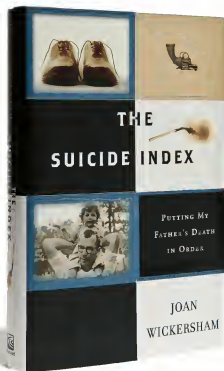
I threw out the manuscripts, and began to write about my father's life in little chapters. The memoir that resulted

is called *The Suicide Index: Putting My Father's Death in Order* because it is structured as an index. The sections are alphabetized, which gives them order, but it's an ironic and almost ridiculously formal order, which is a way of saying that the experience of a suicide defies emotional and rational order.

There are chapters that are written in first person, in second person, in third person. There are chapters in which I'm trying to work my way into my father's mind. There are chapters that almost could have been from a novel. In a novel, however, you put your characters through a series of trials, and you learn about them by the way they come through. Suicide was a disruption, a confusion. I had, in fact, come to feel that my father's suicide had tampered with my memory of him, with my sense that I knew him and he knew me.

The problem with a family memoir, of course, is that you can't tell your story without telling other people's stories. I didn't ask my family's permission to write this story. Some

Once I got started I spent eight years, on and off, doing all of the things novelists do when they don't know what they're doing. Then I threw out the manuscripts.



people are very open about family memoirs, and they pass around successive drafts. I couldn't write under those circumstances. I recognized immediately that my version of family history would be different from my mother's or my sister's, and that a suicide, in any case, leaves behind competing versions of history that will never match up. But I also felt that if I was going to write this book, I had to do it honestly; and that presented a dilemma, because while I wanted to be honest, I didn't want to gratuitously hurt people.

There are stories that are best told through fiction, and in some ways I believe that fiction is more truthful than nonfiction because it allows an author to get at emotional complexities in a way that nonfiction rarely does. But this book had to be a memoir because in it I'm grappling with the nature of memory itself, trying to figure out what memories I have that are reliable, what memories I have that are unreliable, and how I can reconcile my father's suicide with my memory of his life.

—Joan Wickersham



BRCA1: *What We Have*

UNTIL I WROTE THIS MEMOIR, my experience with the genre was primarily academic, principally focused on “Writing the Self,” a course I teach about life-writing during the 17th century. In my own poetry, fiction, and scholarship, I have generally stayed away from family matters, and most particularly from the subject of *What We Have*: a mutated BRCA1 gene that led to the deaths by breast and ovarian cancer of most of the women in my mother’s family while they were still in their forties.

The book focuses on a year in the life of my family, a year in which my mother was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer, in which my first daughter was born, and in which the experience of one life ending and another beginning crossed for me. This was a year that already felt, as I began working on the project about five years ago, as if it had taken place a long while back, and yet, like all the most pressing of family histories, was still continuing to unfold.

In my teaching, I often ask students to look at the blurred boundaries between memoir and fiction. Many well-known novels are constructed as fictional autobiographies. Why? Is it because the first-person narrative of lived experience has so compelling a hold on readers? Or because the first-person voice in fiction lays bare and troubles the bounds of authenticity? I know that I was conscious of a strong need to use novelistic devices when I wrote and rewrote *What We Have*: in my decision, for instance, to confine most of the narrative to a single year, as well as my use of dialogue, in the imagining of exemplary scenes to tell the story, and the attempts to bring to life various members of my family as realizable characters.

I was deeply aware that I was telling the story not just on my behalf but for other members of my family, some of whom read and commented on every draft, and some of whom barely knew what I was writing. It’s a tricky business, writing about family. I know, for example, that I waited to write this book until my own daughters were old enough to give their young adult consent to publishing its story, as they are part of the story both in the past and in the (still unfolding) future.

What We Have may be a memoir, but it is by no means a “book of me,” a chronicle about who I am or what my life has been like or how I see my character. I don’t think I would have had any patience to write a book like that, and I can’t imagine why anyone would care to read it. Rather, *What We Have* is a highly particularized account of a set of family circumstances, choices, and decisions in which I was involved and that I felt needed to be told, not simply for my enjoyment as a writer, but because I thought the telling might be useful in opening conversations about some of the issues associated with genetic mutation, disease prevention, and the perception and experience of risk.

What did I learn about memoir from writing this book? I suppose two things: first, that the impulse to cover up truth is surprisingly strong on the part of the writer of memoir, as well as her supposed subjects; and second, that the objects in the mirror may not be closer than they appear after all.

—Amy Boesky

Suzanne Berne teaches writing in the Boston College English department and is the award-winning author of three novels. An excerpt from *Missing Lucile: Memories of the Grandmother I Never Knew* appeared in the Summer 2010 issue of this magazine. Joan Wickersham is a novelist, short-story writer, and essayist; she writes an op-ed column for the *Boston Globe*. Amy Boesky is a member of the English faculty and a scholar of 17th-century British literature.



The panel “Why Memoir? A Discussion of Form, Function, and Family Matters” can be viewed at Full Story, www.bc.edu/bcm.



LEGAL AID

WHEN THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE VOTED IN
1966 TO END THE LAST ALL-OUT BAN ON CONTRACEPTIVES
IN THE NATION, IT WAS WITH THE APPROVAL AND
ASSISTANCE OF THE BOSTON ARCHDIOCESE

BY SETH MEEHAN

ON FEBRUARY 15, 1963, BOSTON'S CARDINAL Richard James Cushing (1895–1970) was the guest on “Conversation Piece,” an afternoon talk show on local radio station WEEI. Not for the first time since the campaign and election of President John F. Kennedy, a Boston Catholic, Cushing addressed public concerns about the role of the Catholic Church in politics. As Kennedy himself had done, Cushing offered the assurance that Catholics did not believe religious viewpoints should control political decision making in the democratic arena. The leader of 1.8 million Catholics in the Boston Archdiocese, Cushing told the radio audience that he had no desire to impose the Church's

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: In photos from the era, Planned Parenthood's Hazel Sagoff, Cardinal Richard Cushing, Joseph Dorsey, Msgr. Francis Lally, State Representative Michael Dukakis, Dr. John Rock, Cushing's lawyer Henry Leen, and John Courtney Murray, SJ.

moral judgments, by using his considerable influence over Massachusetts legislation, on people of other faiths.

The statement practically begged for a follow-up: What about birth control? In Massachusetts in 1963, there was hardly a more delicate question for the Catholic hierarchy. The federal government's approval, in 1960, of the first birth control pill—developed by a Catholic physician in the Boston area, as it happened—had brought contraception into a new era. Yet providing contraceptive devices and even information on birth control was illegal in Massachusetts, as it had been since 1879, leaving the Commonwealth as one of only two states (Connecticut being the other) in which contraception was, practically speaking, against the law.

The lines were opened to callers and the inevitable question came quickly. Few people knew it at the time, but the anonymous female caller who asked if Cushing considered the state's ban on contraceptives to be "bad law" (as the *Boston Globe* reported) was Hazel Sagoff, executive director of the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (PPLM). Sagoff got the answer she wanted, indeed the one she had been led to expect by a Cushing confidant some two weeks earlier. For the first time in public, Cushing suggested that the law against contraceptives should be changed. "I have no right to impose my thinking, which is rooted in religious thought, on those who do not think as I do," he said. "If and when such legislation comes before the voters again," he reflected, he would "confer with the [Church's] best authorities" to find out "how I am obligated." The cardinal declared he would continue to explain Catholic teaching. (Briefly, the Church held—and holds—contraception to be a denial of natural law, a turning against the procreative nature with which God imbued human beings.) But he would "not go out campaigning": In a pluralistic society, Catholics ought not to insist on a civil law so divisive and unenforceable.

The last political opportunity to reconsider the ban on contraceptives in Massachusetts had come in 1948. Cushing's stance then had been quite different. As voters squared off over a referendum that would have permitted physicians to distribute birth control to married women "for the protection of life or health," Cushing, four years into his episcopate at age 53, had mobilized Catholic laity and led an aggressive offense, waged by clergy on the radio and from the pulpit, arguing artificial birth control was "still against God's law."

Church officials then had stressed the need to align state laws with those of God, to protect citizens and to create God's kingdom on earth. Cushing termed the state's birth control restrictions a "unique advantage" for Massachusetts and defined contraception as "anti-social and anti-patriotic, as well as absolutely immoral." In tone, his statements recalled a nation recently at war. They also reflected the theological influence of the archdiocese's powerful auxiliary

bishop at the time, John Joseph Wright '31. In 1942, Wright had published a book titled *National Patriotism in Papal Teaching*, in which he argued for the role of the Church as a "unifying social instrument." The moral stability of the state, Wright said, depended on the moral stability of the family, and birth control struck at "the existence and vitality of the fatherland" by lowering the national birth rate and the nation's standards.

The full-bore campaign by Catholic officialdom prevailed. The referendum to end the ban on contraceptives was rejected by 57 percent of Massachusetts voters. But the fight had been bruising. Four years later, when it looked like Planned Parenthood might revive its efforts at a repeal, Cushing wrote a friend, "[Planned Parenthood] will never say die. I hate to think of going through another battle."

Did the cardinal's statement on the radio in 1963 represent a political recalculation? Possibly. Cushing was ever a man of his times. For example, in a pastoral letter in 1960, he had articulated what seemed, for him, a new view of Catholic life in America. A pluralistic democracy—a "society of differing beliefs"—he said should stress what unifies its people, rather than what divides. Cushing published the letter on March 12, during the week of the first presidential primary, likely attempting to alleviate concerns about religious views attributed to presidential aspirant John Kennedy.

But if political realities informed Cushing's altered tone, new theological influences do more to explain his shifting perspective on Church-state relations and ultimately on birth control legislation. Among individuals who had dealings with Cushing at the time, and among scholars, Cushing is known to have been a man open to persuasion—a willow more than an oak. In 1950 Bishop Wright left Boston for Worcester, and in 1959 Wright left Massachusetts altogether (he would go on to become, in 1969, the highest ranking American in the Roman curia, the prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy). At a time when the Church was in an intense internal debate over its role in democratic societies, Cushing found a new theological advisor whose progressive influence on Catholic leaders was growing.

The U.S. Jesuit theologian John Courtney Murray (1904–67) published his first book, *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition*, in 1960 (chapters from it appeared throughout the 1950s in other publications). In the book, Murray highlighted the distinction between public laws and private morality. Laws are always meant to legislate morality, he wrote, but there must be limitations on the types of moral judgments civil laws can make. A public law should address private morality only if that law will be obeyed and enforced. "In the absence of this consent," he said, "law either withers away or becomes tyrannical." Murray defined pluralism as "coexistence": It "implies a disagreement and dissension within a commu-

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nity. But it also implies a community within which there must be agreement and consensus." Richard Cushing—disenchanted with strife, politically attuned, and increasingly respectful of differences (he had a Jewish brother-in-law, after all, whom he admired)—became Murray's student. It was, as far as is known, primarily a long-distance relationship, preserved in letters and memoranda, with Murray situated in Maryland; the two also may have conferred during trips to Rome for the Second Vatican Council (1962–65).

In September 1964, word spread that Murray was to be "first scribe" for a declaration on religious freedom that would be promulgated by the close of Vatican II. For those who followed Catholic affairs, the news could be taken as a sign of the Church's direction as it emerged from debates on its place in the 20th century.

Murray's influential views on coexistence explain why the Boston Archdiocese would support ending a full ban on contraceptives in the 1960s. The actions of two Boston area lay Catholics, both medical men, were key in determining when the ban would fall. Their names were John Rock (1890–1984) and Joseph Dorsey (b. 1938).

WHEN JOHN ROCK, A CATHOLIC PHYSICIAN FROM Brookline, developed an oral contraceptive in the early 1950s, he expected it to prove morally acceptable to the Church. Well into his sixties at the time and a professor emeritus of gynecology at Harvard University, he believed the pill represented a natural form of birth control in line with the Church-approved rhythm method. He noted that women's normal cyclical secretions of progesterone established a "pre- and post-menstrual 'safe period.'" His pill, Rock contended, only elongated that safe period.

Rock's clinical work in developing the contraceptive, and his public statements, brought criticism from Catholic leaders. In June 1962, the *Pilot*, the Boston Archdiocese's official newspaper, published a statement by Cushing on the subject: "Those who are specialists in the pertinent areas of the natural sciences have every right to continue their research and experimentation within the limits imposed by the moral law," the cardinal wrote. "When their conclusions come into relation with the teachings of Catholic moral theologians, however, they have no right to express themselves independently." Affirming the Church's position, Cushing wrote, "Every method of contraception which interferes

with the progress of marital activity towards its natural goal of conception is intrinsically wrong and in violation of the natural law."

Nine months later, Rock published a book called *The Time Has Come: A Catholic Doctor's Proposals to End the Battle over Birth Control*, in which he restated his views. The book won some converts in the Church hierarchy—a Dutch bishop, a former archbishop from Bombay. That same year, Pope John XXIII launched the Papal Birth Control Commission—its official title was the Pontifical Commission for the Study of Population, Family, and Births. The commission would consider the issue for some three years. Rock's book had a direct impact on the debate within his state, as the doctor declared that many Catholics desired a change in the Massachusetts law "without the accompanying unpleasantness and bad feeling" of a vote and "without violating the religious convictions" of any citizen.

Three days before the book's official publication date, Cushing issued a response, printed in the *Pilot*. Because Rock was writing on "a subject pertaining to faith or morality," the cardinal regretted the doctor's failure to submit his manuscript for Church approval, he said. At the same time, his tone was conciliatory. Cushing noted that some of Rock's public policy suggestions "could contribute to the establishment of peace in our pluralistic society."

Later that spring, Rock delivered a lecture at the Harvard Medical School (the subject, as someone in attendance recalled, was "the importance of monogamous relationships"). Afterward he was approached by a 25-year-old Harvard medical student, Joseph Dorsey. The young man, a Catholic, had questions for the doctor about the state's contraception law, the Church's position, and whether the pill might be an option for Catholics.

Dorsey had been educated at two Jesuit-run institutions, Scranton Preparatory School, in Pennsylvania, and the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. While beginning his medical training at Dartmouth College—his first experience outside Catholic education—Dorsey found himself starting to question the practice of using civil laws to legislate certain types of morality.

After speaking with Rock, he wrote a letter to Cardinal Cushing, whom he had never met. Four decades later, when I interviewed Dorsey, he recalled telling the cardinal of his interest in the state's birth control law, describing his

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encounter with Rock, and expressing his desire to discuss the issue with someone inside the Church. The young doctor was contacted by Rev. James O'Donohoe, a professor of moral theology at St. John's Seminary in Brighton. Soon after, Dorsey and his wife were hosting a dinner party in their Boston apartment that included O'Donohoe; Msgr. Francis Lally '40, the *Pilot's* powerful editor; and James Faulkner, a former dean of the Boston University School of Medicine and member of the group that published the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Equally significant, Faulkner's wife served on the executive committee of the board of PPLM. Over the next few months, Dorsey and his new contacts formed a plan involving legislation to repeal the state's restrictions on the dissemination of birth control. They decided to publish their blueprint as an article written by Dorsey.

In July 1964, Dorsey sent a draft of his text to Cushing, asking for his thoughts. (He also sent a copy to Rock.) Cushing replied that if the issue faced another voter referendum, he would "state very emphatically, over and over again, the stand of the Catholic Church" in opposing birth control, but he would "make no effort to enter into a political phase." Cushing told Dorsey outright that the repeal effort "should never be brought to a popular referendum again." Together with the cardinal's comments, Dorsey received a formal imprimatur from the archdiocese, signed by Cushing and O'Donohoe, recognizing that nothing in his article contradicted Church teaching.

Dorsey's write-up appeared as a "special article" in the October 15, 1964, issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, under the title "Changing Attitudes Toward the Massachusetts Birth-Control Law." Monsignor Lally wrote a short introduction, in which he noted that many felt "the time was ripe for reconsidering" the law.

In language that would be heard again and again as the debate played out, Dorsey acknowledged that the birth control law was perhaps "the cause of more hard feeling between Roman Catholics and their neighbors in the Commonwealth than any single issue in the past quarter century." He went on to say there had been a recent "change in attitude on the part of Catholics," who realized "the need in a pluralistic society for a consensus on a moral principle before it can be expressed as a civil law."

Dorsey presented a detailed strategy for altering the law,

which included a proposal that neither the Catholic Church nor Planned Parenthood assume a leadership role—to minimize the potential for a revived and hostile debate. Instead, it was "feasible for a group of citizens of all faiths to formulate what they consider a good law." He acknowledged that a court challenge was an option—the Supreme Court was expected to consider the constitutionality of Connecticut's birth control law—but he believed that such a course would fail to take advantage of the goodwill that had developed among Massachusetts's religious and secular communities. Dorsey concluded, "If ever these problems could be approached in a spirit of friendship and cooperation the time is now."

After the article's publication, medical and legal professionals, including Dorsey, secretly gathered for an informal series of conferences led by the state's health commissioner, Alfred Frechette, to propose wording for a bill to lift the state's restrictions on birth control. O'Donohoe attended at least once, in late November. These conferences, which were not reported in the media at the time and have not been discussed in subsequent historical narratives, were conducted with a looming deadline: December 2, 1964, was the final day to submit a bill to the legislature for consideration in the next legislative session.

Accounts in the Planned Parenthood archives indicate that, at the last minute, Cushing asked Frechette not to file a bill. According to the PPLM's Sagoff, the cardinal wanted to wait "until after the Ecumenical Council had approved religious liberty"—a reference to John Courtney Murray's continuing work on the Vatican Council's *Declaration on Religious Freedom*—which would give a repeal in Massachusetts the cover of Vatican acceptability. But momentum had grown too great. Though Frechette did step back, on December 2, Brookline State Representative Michael Dukakis, a Democrat, filed a bill at the formal request of constituents to end the state ban on distribution of contraceptives. Public debate on the birth control law would begin, and Church leaders readied themselves. On December 9, an anonymous memorandum was drafted and circulated within the archdiocese calling on the *Pilot* to make "no announcements" and on Church officials to refrain from public statements on the bill, "lest we stir up trouble with the Planned Parenthood people who have also pledged their 'cooperation by silence.'"

ON MARCH 2, 1965, A MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATIVE panel, the Joint Committee on Public Health, held an open hearing on the proposed act. Cardinal Cushing had been invited to testify but, as he was recovering from surgery, he sent his personal attorney, Henry Leen '29, to deliver prepared remarks. Unbeknownst to legislators and the public, the remarks were written by John Courtney Murray, at Cushing's request.

The cardinal's statement began with a reference to the "wide and profound" internal study of the Church's position on birth control currently under way. Creation of the Papal Birth Control Commission had sparked broad speculation as to whether the Church would soon alter its views, but Cushing-Murray said it was not at all clear that Church teaching on the morality of artificial contraception would change. What was clear, because of Murray's involvement, was that the Vatican would soon recognize religious freedom of conscience for all. And so the statement declared that Catholics could not reasonably "forbid in civil law a practice that can be considered a matter of private morality." Nor did Catholics need "the support of civil law to be faithful."

The legislation under consideration, Leen read, was not without faults. The bill lacked "proper safeguards" for the young, for instance. Although unable to endorse the proposal, the cardinal requested that the governor, Republican John Volpe, appoint a commission of "citizens representing a broad community consensus" to craft legislation that would "satisfy the conscientious opinions of the whole community." Cushing's request "did not come as a surprise" to the bill's proponents at Planned Parenthood, according to archived PPLM documents. They understood that the cardinal was stalling, awaiting the theological support from Rome that the *Declaration on Religious Freedom* would bring.

The *Boston Globe* gave the hearing a front-page banner headline: "Cardinal Relaxes Anti-Birth Law Stand." And soon after, the governor appointed a 21-member commission to redraft the bill. On it sat Dorsey, the *Pilot's* Lally, Cushing's lawyer Leen, and at least three other Catholics. That same day, June 7, 1965, the U.S. Supreme Court decided *Griswold v. Connecticut*, making Connecticut's bar to the use of contraceptive devices unconstitutional, and leaving Massachusetts the last state with a blanket ban. (The decision didn't affect the Commonwealth because Connecticut's law had banned not only distribution but also use, and it was on this second aspect that the case turned.) Three weeks later Volpe's commission unanimously approved a revised bill. It permitted access to contraception in the state for married persons over the age of 21. Leen endorsed it publicly at a legislative hearing.

But agreement among this small, if diverse, group of

insiders did not guarantee a smooth transition. In a stunning vote, the Massachusetts House rejected the bill, 119 to 97, on August 2, 1965, as William X. Wall of Lawrence, a Democratic Senate leader, looked on approvingly, holding a copy of the New Testament. From the House floor, Democratic Representative Lawrence Smith, also of Lawrence—a father of 15 and a leading opponent of the measure—cited as justification the absence of a specific endorsement of the bill by Cushing. The opinion of the commission's Catholics, including Cushing's lawyer, was "not the same" as that of the cardinal, he said. This likely marked a rare point of agreement for Smith and Planned Parenthood's Sagoff. "It now appears that everyone in the State-house knows that Cardinal Cushing *does not* approve of the amendment at this time," Sagoff had noted shortly before the commission's creation. She added, "Catholic politicians, and even non-Catholics with Catholic constituencies, will vote against the amendment unless they hear . . . that the cardinal wants them to vote for it."

The Second Vatican Council ended on December 8 with a closing address by Pope Paul VI that bore messages for Council fathers, world rulers, scientists and scholars, artists, women, the poor and suffering, workers, and youth—but no statement on birth control. (That would await the issuance by Paul VI of *Humanae Vitae—Of Human Life*—on July 25, 1968.) *Dignitatis Humanae*, the *Declaration on Religious Freedom* drafted largely by Murray, was promulgated on December 7.

In Massachusetts, the birth control issue next came up at a meeting of the legislature's committee on public health in April 1966. In a letter sent to the committee, Cushing commented on a proposed law to permit distribution of contraceptives by registered physicians and pharmacists to married couples. He said yet again that Catholics "do not seek to impose by law their moral view on other members of society." But more important were his affirming words on the bill itself, which, he said, "appears to contain additional safeguards for the public welfare."

On April 25, 1966, following a successful preliminary vote, the Massachusetts House elected to support the bill, labeled House Bill 2965, by a count of 138 to 80. The Senate followed suit on May 3, and Governor Volpe signed it into law a week later, on May 10. An internal Planned Parenthood history drafted in 1968 credited the bill's passage to "Catholic understanding of religious liberty for persons of all faiths." ■

Seth Meehan is a Ph.D. student in history at Boston College. His essay is drawn and adapted from an article titled "From Patriotism to Pluralism: How Catholics Initiated the Repeal of Birth Control Restrictions in Massachusetts." Published in the *Catholic Historical Review* in July 2010, the article earned Meehan the Peter Guilday Prize from the American Catholic Historical Association.



Along the Silk Road

Photographs by Alex Guittard '11

In the summer of 2009, Alex Guittard '11 found himself with a free month between the end of his sophomore classes and the beginning of a Persian language course he'd signed up for in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. He decided to pursue a long-standing dream and travel overland from Istanbul to Tajikistan, tracing the ancient Silk Road, the caravan route that at various times in history linked China and the Mediterranean. By bus, shared taxi, and occasional hitched rides, Guittard traversed 4,300 miles, passing through Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan, staying in hostels or small guesthouses, eating at roadside cafes. Following two months of language studies, which were supported in part by

an Advanced Study Grant from Boston College, Guittard traveled south to Afghanistan for a month, "to kick the tires of my Dari [a Persian dialect spoken in Afghanistan] and explore the country. . . . I couldn't pass for a native, but I could usually pass for a member of a nearby ethnic group. A lot of people thought in Afghanistan that I was a Nuristani because of my

light skin and funny Dari accent." In addition to Dari, Guittard speaks Standard Persian, Tajik, French, Italian, and Arabic (both Lebanese and Modern Standard).

Guittard, who is majoring in political science and Islamic civilizations and societies, returned to Afghanistan in summer 2010, with funding assistance from the Islamic civilizations and societies program. He toured the country interviewing local, provincial, and national leaders as well as tribal elders in preparation for writing his thesis on the governance structures of Afghan tribes. Upon graduation he will enter the U.S. Army Reserve and seek a career in the diplomatic corps.

BCM presents a selection of Guittard's photographs taken on his Central Asian journeys. Several of them appeared first in *Al-Noor*, Boston College's undergraduate research journal for Middle Eastern and Islamic studies.

—Thomas C. Cooper



OPPOSITE, TOP: A ground fire, one of many fueled by seeping natural gas deposits, blazes next to a roadside café near Baku, Azerbaijan (the country's name means "protected by the holy fire"). This blaze has burned continuously since the 1950s. BOTTOM: A fishing boat from the Uzbek town of Muynaq lies stranded since the 1980s, some 50 miles from the Aral Sea. The sea has shrunk to a tenth of its original size since the Soviets diverted feeder rivers for irrigation. ABOVE: A map of Guittard's route in 2009 (red) and 2010 (orange).





OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Overlooking Istaravshan in northwest Tajikistan, this recently refashioned portion of a 6th-century citadel is a symbol of Tajik nationalism. OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT: Two Tajik youngsters at the entrance to an Islamic shrine in the country's eastern, Pamir region. The sheep horns are vestiges of a pre-Islamic form of worship. OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT: The tilework and minarets of Samarkand, Uzbekistan, are some of the finest examples in Islamic architecture. This shot shows the facades of two madrassas (schools) that frame the city's Registan, a vast square known as the seat of Islamic learning in the region.

ABOVE: A freshly painted statue of Vladimir Lenin in northern Tajikistan, where the years of annexation to the Soviet Union are viewed by many as a commendable part of their history. RIGHT: A market stall selling spices in Fergana, a city in eastern Uzbekistan. The bazaars of Central Asia offer goods from across the Middle East, China, Russia, and beyond.





ABOVE: Shops and homes line the banks of the Kabul River, in Kabul. Normally this scene would be bustling, but Guitard took his photo on August 24, 2009, Afghanistan's Election Day. Stores were closed in anticipation of violence, the streets nearly empty. Turnout was low. LEFT: The tee for the third hole (338 yards, par 4) at the Kabul Golf Club. Built in the 1960s for upper-class Afghans, the course was closed during the Russian and Taliban eras, but recently reopened. Balls travel far in the thin air (altitude: 6,000 ft.).

OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT: Guitard stands in front of discarded Russian military hardware at the head of the Panjshir Valley in north central Afghanistan. Placed there by valley residents, the display is meant as a reminder of the defeats the Soviets suffered in attempts to subdue the region.

OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT: An oil derrick in a village outside Azerbaijan's capital, Baku. The rig was installed by the Soviets. OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: A view of the Panjshir Valley from a memorial to the mujahideen Ahmad Shah Massoud, who led the Northern Alliance resistance to the Soviets, then was assassinated in 2001 by members of Al-Qaeda, two days before September 11.



C21 Notes

QUOTABLE

"Movement from rural to urban and suburban areas has meant that many of the rural churches that were once staffed by a single priest are now being combined. About half of all the parishes in the United States are in a situation where the priest has at least another parish. And most priests are doing a second job of some kind, even if they're in a large urban or suburban parish."

—Katarina Schuth, OSF, holder of the Endowed Chair for the Social Scientific Study of Religion at the St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity, in a lecture entitled "Preparing to Serve: Seminary 2011," delivered March 21 at 9 Lake Street. The talk may be viewed in full at www.bc.edu/church21/.

Two roads

By William Bole

In public forums, Jesuit and parish clergy reflect on the priestly journey

IMEDIATELY FOLLOWING A February 17 forum on the diocesan priesthood, Fr. J. Bryan Hehir, a scholar and priest of the Archdiocese of Boston, found himself in a conversation about why parish priests don't have Sunday dinner with parishioners as often as they used to. "I'm going from six in the morning until nine or 10 at night on Sundays," Hehir said, plaintively. "I have dinner at 10:00 P.M." Given that Hehir had spoken at the forum held in the Heights Room and received a substantial introduction, his interlocutors probably knew that in addition to residing and ministering at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, the priest also holds down two day jobs, as a professor of religion and public life at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and as secretary of health care and social services for the archdiocese.

During the forum, Fr. Paul O'Brien, pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Lawrence, Massachusetts, was even more emphatic when a questioner, Robert Davis '62, a retired philosophy instructor who taught at several institutions, wistfully recalled the days when a parishioner could knock on the rectory door and see a priest at any time. Stressing that the priesthood today must be a "collaborative ministry" involving lay people, O'Brien added colorfully that there are still many Catholics who "want a priest for every bowel movement they have and every occasion."

There are issues in the Catholic Church obviously more pressing than the availability of priests for Sunday dinner, but those exchanges illustrate how easy it is to touch a nerve when the subject is this group of men. In recent months Boston College's Church in the 21st Century Center turned a spotlight on ordained



Seminarians from Conception Seminary College in Missouri, at the November 2009 National Catholic Youth Conference in Kansas City, Kansas

priests at two evening forums: the panel discussion of diocesan priests, which, in addition to Hehir and O'Brien, included Fr. William Lohan of St. Mary of the Assumption in Dedham, Massachusetts; and a March 31 standing-room-only gathering, also in the Heights Room, about being a Jesuit today, featuring University President William P. Leahy, SJ; John T. "Jack" Butler, SJ, Boston College's vice president for mission and ministry; and Jeremy Zippel, SJ, '00, who began theology studies this past year at the University's School of Theology and Ministry.

The events were part of a wider series presented by C21, as the center is known, on the vocations of ordained clergy and members of religious orders. Other forums addressed the permanent diaconate (an ordained ministry of service carried out by men who may be married) and the future of women religious.

Both programs on priestly life began with vocational questions from the moderators about how panelists came to discern their calling. At least a couple of the six men on the two panels spoke of the decision to become a priest as a sudden bolt of inspiration. O'Brien said he had "no attraction whatsoever" to the idea of entering the clergy's ranks, particularly the diocesan clergy, whom he regarded at the time (after graduating from Harvard in 1985) as "dim versions of Jesuits." But he recalled how, as his mind wandered during a Sunday Mass at St. Paul's Church in Cambridge, he felt God "hitting me over the head: 'This is what I want you to do—to be one of the priests.'" O'Brien was ordained in 1991. For others, like Hehir, the discernment was gradual, and Leahy recalled entertaining his first thoughts about a priestly vocation when he was barely school age, growing up in an Irish Catholic farm family in Iowa.

The panelists at both gatherings were asked about their sources of priestly joy, and the Jesuits (prompted by moderator Michael Boughton, SJ, director of the Boston College Center for Ignatian Spirituality) were more animated on this question than their diocesan counterparts. Each one alluded to the characteristic Jesuit way of proceeding, which aims joyfully to "find God in all things" and discern God's presence through the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius. (Unlike diocesan clergy, each religious order has its own style or expression of spirituality, defined originally by its founder and often described as its "charism.") Zippel, who works as a documentary filmmaker for National Geographic Television, noted that Catholicism in general is deeply "incarnational" in that it recognizes the sacred in the ordinary, but he suggested that Jesuits are particularly prone to seeing

the divine hand at work. Zippel noted that he has looked for signs of God's activity in the course of his filmmaking, on subjects ranging from the life of St. Francis Xavier (which lent easily enough to Jesuit spiritual sensibility) to a rat infestation in northeastern India (which lent less readily). Butler said he and his fellow Jesuits will look at a troubling reality—such as the widening gap between rich and poor, or waning clerical numbers—and try to “see where God is active in it.” Even more, the Jesuit panelists enumerated the joys of religious communal life, all three paying tribute to the “brothers” who guide and nourish and share the priestly experience with them.

Diocesan priests tend to be situated differently. They are the ones most likely to be ministering to regular Catholics in the pew, a frontline role that gives them their sense of clerical purpose, according to those at the February forum moderated by Fr. Robert Imbelli, a Boston College theology professor and priest in the Archdiocese of New York. O'Brien, for example, spoke of the satisfaction he derives from tending to the spiritual needs of a bustling immigrant parish (formerly Irish, now largely Hispanic), and to some other needs—teaching children in the church's youth group how to make a jump shot, for instance. But there are also distinct challenges on the diocesan road, personal ones, like returning alone to what is increasingly a one-priest rectory, owing to the worsening shortage of parish clergy. There was no talk of priestly community at the diocesan forum.

The Jesuits, too, spoke of declining numbers. A questioner asked how it came to be that so few young men are attracted to the Jesuit life, and Leahy replied that the attraction is still there, “but there are other things that get into the picture,” many other options that young, talented Catholic men have these days. Boughton injected a global perspective, citing increasing Jesuit vocations in countries such as India and Vietnam.

THE MOST POINTED COMMENTS CAME from panelists and audience members at the forum on diocesan priests, particularly when the subject turned to challenges confronting the clergy.

One problem has to do with “the priest's

relationship to the economically poor,” as O'Brien framed the issue, referring to the swelling numbers of poor immigrants who need pastoral care. “I don't think the majority of priests today want to be in these communities, and how strange is that?” he said, alluding to Jesus's ministry among the marginalized. “How is it that priests can drift away from the people who are most alive in Christ?” he wondered. Hehir, the archdiocesan official, was the only one at either forum who underlined the consequences of the clergy sexual abuse scandals, which are “so deep, so widespread, so profoundly shocking, that it will take 20 years to overcome,” he predicted.

During the Q&A, an older man spoke up: “Nobody is talking about the big elephant in the room,” which was, in his rendering, the celibacy requirement that is tamping down priestly vocations. Lohan of the Dedham parish, who was ordained in 2008, responded with a provocative version of the boilerplate answer that priests are married to the Church. Motioning to the audience, he said: “Let me ask the ladies out there: How many of you ladies would like your husband to love you less exclusively?” He added that Christ was not married. There were some groans, and a man's voice could be heard

“But what about the Eastern churches?” (Married priests are the norm in Eastern-rite Catholic communions.)

The issue of women's ordination received no development during either program, although at the Jesuit event a young woman related with a smile that someone recently told her, “If you were a guy, I could see you becoming a Jesuit.” She identified herself as a Catholic schoolteacher with an abiding interest in Ignatian spirituality, and her friendly question was about how she could pursue this passion.

“I would say follow your heart and live it out,” Leahy advised simply, and it seemed that some young lay men and women in the crowded room were already doing so. Speaking to a reporter afterward, Lauren Sommer '08, GSSW '09, a social worker at an assisted living facility in Roxbury, recalled that she “fell in love with all things Jesuit” as an undergraduate. She came to the forum with eight other student and alumni leaders of Boston College's Kairos group—part of a national retreat program that brings Ignatian-style discernment to high school and college students across the United States.



Videos of both C21 panel discussions on the priesthood may be viewed via Full Story, www.bc.edu/bcm.

Mistaken identities

Drawn and adapted from “A Pox on Both Your Houses: Moving beyond the ‘Liberal’ and ‘Conservative’ Labels in Catholic Theology,” the Candelmas lecture given as part of the Lowell Humanities Series by Mark Massa, SJ, dean of the School of Theology and Ministry, February 14 in Devlin Hall:

Until the 1960s, there were only two kinds of Catholics: faithful and lapsed. But battles were set off by the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, and a deep ambivalence toward discontinuity and change was awakened among Catholics, leading many to adopt political labels, especially “conservative” and “liberal,” to describe one another. Yet to be in favor of the liturgical reforms mandated by Vatican II—intended to bring current liturgical practice closer to that of the early Church—is hardly to be liberal in any meaningful sense. Likewise, to argue strenuously for papal authority in Church governance cannot be considered conservative, given that a succession of popes beginning with Leo XIII in 1878 offered progressive social teachings about workers' rights, the dangers of an unmonitored capitalism, and a spectrum of other issues well in advance of many political liberals of their time. The labeling of fellow believers has done great harm in North America, binding political and theological loyalties into something like shadow political parties, driving believers into stances that are harmful to both religion and politics.

—Mark Massa, SJ

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There are 35,000 works of art displayed in the Louvre Museum. How did one of them become the most famous on the planet?

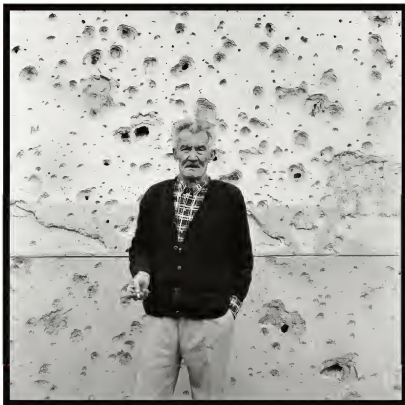
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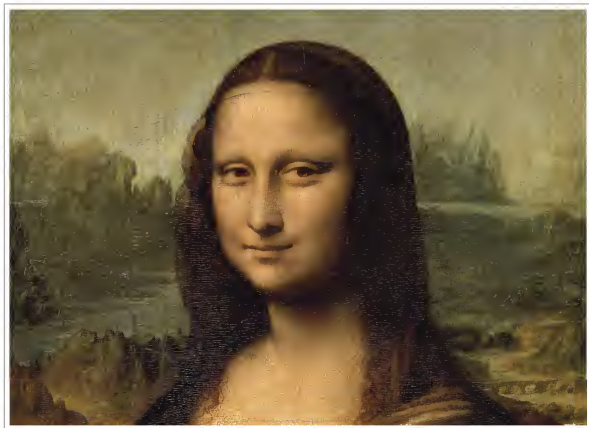
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A poem

From the O'Neill Library



In 1998, fine arts lecturer Charles Meyer began photographing people living in the aftermath of religious or ethnic conflict. *Man in Front of Bullet Riddled Wall* was taken June 6, 1998, in the Croatian city of Vukovar, site of a devastating 87-day siege in 1991, during the Croatian war for independence. An exhibition of Meyer's black-and-white portraits and triptychs—*Witnessing Conflict: Photographs from the Balkans, Kosovo, South Africa, and Northern Ireland*—will be on display at the Level Three Gallery in O'Neill Library through September 14.



La Gioconda

A STAR IS MADE

By Donald Sassoon

There are 35,000 works of art displayed in the Louvre Museum. How did one of them become the most famous on the planet?

A YOUNG WOMAN IS SEATED, HER RIGHT HAND UPON her wrist, her left hand on the arm of a chair, gripping its edge. She turns toward us, presenting a three quarter view. Her round visage faces us directly. Her brown eyes glance toward the right. Her broad forehead is enhanced by her missing eyebrows. Her hair, shoulder length, is draped by a translucent veil. She wears a sober, dark dress. A pleated mantle adorns her shoulders. Her neckline reveals the inception of her breasts.

She wears no jewels.

She smiles.

The loggia or balcony where she sits appears to be suspended upon a chasm. Behind her surges a strange and distant landscape: rock formations, mountain peaks, hills, and valleys; to the left a lake and winding path, on the right a river crossed by a bridge, forlorn signs of human existence in a barren landscape.

All this is represented on a piece of wood roughly 21 inches wide and 30 inches high. The Louvre Museum identifies the painting, done in oil, by the inventory number 779. It is the only painting in the museum shown in a special box set in concrete and protected by two sheets of bulletproof, triple laminated glass separated from each other by 9.75 inches. The painting has been in this box since 1974. It is inspected annually—the silica gel used to maintain the temperature is changed, the wood is checked for shrinkage or swelling.

The painting occupies a gallery with 10 Titians, five Tintoretos, and eight Veroneses. Nearby reside seven Raphaels, various Bronzinos, Correggios, Fra Angelicos, and a stunning Caravaggio. All these works—and many more—can be contemplated at leisure by the approximately nine million visitors who come to the Louvre each year. All except this portrait of, allegedly, Lisa Gherardini,

wife of Francesco del Giocondo and known throughout the world as the *Mona Lisa*, or *La Gioconda*.

The obstacle to unimpeded viewing is the constantly shifting crowd (50 deep in summer) trying to catch a glimpse of the famous painting and to photograph it. The flashes from the cameras refracting off the glass not only make it difficult to examine the work, but add to the sense that the object is a celebrity. However, many visitors who stand before the *Mona Lisa* are left a little disconcerted. She is a plain woman, the painting is not grandiose.

Why then did Leonardo da Vinci, who created the painting in the first decade of the 16th century and in the sixth decade of his life, keep it for himself instead of handing it over to the husband? Is it really a portrait of Lisa Gherardini? Perhaps it is Isabella d'Este, the great patroness of the arts. A biography of Leonardo alleges it is the portrait of Isabella Gualandi, whom the British tabloid *Sun*,

The painting is shown in a special box
set in concrete and protected by two sheets of
bulletproof, triple laminated glass separated
from each other by 9.75 inches.

in one of its rare forays into the Renaissance, described as a highly paid tart. Others claim it is a self portrait—as the headline in the *Daily Telegraph* put it in 1986, “Leonardo in drag.”

Such uncertainty is surely deliberate. Leonardo refrained from providing any of the usual clues—medallions, symbolic objects—that painters used to identify their subjects. Nor can we be certain of the woman's expression. She is smiling, but not quite. The *sfumato* technique pioneered by Leonardo, the delicate blurring at the corners of the mouth and of the eyes, lends a slight indeterminacy. And the painting is not still. Leonardo used *chiaroscuro* to give it depth and the woman's contrapposto position (her body facing one way, her head facing another) to suggest movement.

Mysteries often surround old paintings—doubtful attributions, inexplicable gaps in their histories. When it comes to the *Mona Lisa* some mysteries seem invented. Above all the famous question: Why is she smiling? As if smiles never occurred in Renaissance paintings. Leonardo's teacher, Verrocchio, often represented smiling faces of great subtlety. Antonello da Messina, who allegedly introduced the Italians to the use of oil, painted a beautiful portrait of a smiling man who looks directly toward the viewer. We do not know the origin of his mischievous smile, either, and few seem to care. Could that be because this portrait of an “unknown man” now hangs at a museum in a small town in Sicily, and not in the heart of Paris?

According to Dr. Kenneth Keele (in the *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 1959), *Mona Lisa* is smiling because she is happy and pregnant. In the *Annals of Otolaryngology, Rhinology and Laryngology* of 1989, Dr. Kedar Adour maintained that, far from smiling, she is controlling her Bell's palsy, a sort of facial paralysis. Her smile hides missing front teeth, in the view of Joseph

Borkowski, professor of dentistry (*Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 1992). Or, as widely reported in September 1999, she is gnashing her teeth, a practice characteristic of those who suffer anxiety. Dr. Filippo Surano, who deduced this, adds she probably also suffers from a kidney inflammation, which accounts for the puffiness in her hands and face. (As medical interest in *Mona Lisa* has increased, her health has deteriorated.)

I do not propose to resolve any of these mysteries, but rather to address what I think is the most interesting enigma of them all: Why is the *Mona Lisa* the best known painting in the world?

IN HIS LIFETIME, LEONARDO WAS REGARDED AS A MAJOR painter, but not the greatest. The competition was considerable. For Christmas dinner in 1501, one could have invited round the table Giovanni Bellini (age 71), Mantegna (70), Botticelli (57), Perugino (55), Bosch (51), Dürer (30), Cranach (29), Michelangelo (26), Raphael (18), and the four-year-old Holbein. Leonardo was able to find a patron in Milan only by stressing his yet unproven skills as a military engineer. His multitude of interests, which helped to fortify his fame in the 19th and 20th centuries, caused Pope Leo X to complain that he never finished anything and to prefer the rising star Raphael.

This helps to explain why, in 1516, Leonardo accepted the invitation of François I and, though no longer young, with the *Mona Lisa* on his back, crossed the Alps to join the king's court in France, where he died three years later. The journey was a good career move for the *Mona Lisa*. François I was laying the foundation for France to become Europe's artistic center. It took the French Revolution, however, to complete this process. In 1793 the revolutionary government created the Musée Central des Arts of the Louvre out of what had been the private royal collection and exhibited some 530 paintings, including the *Mona Lisa*, as the common property of the French people. Artists came from all over Europe, especially Britain, to copy the once secluded works. Turner copied Titian, Delacroix copied Rubens, Ingres copied Raphael. The *Mona Lisa* was copied too, but it was far from heading the list.

Other circumstances would help the *Mona Lisa*'s reputation inch upward. One was the burgeoning cult of Leonardo that developed in the 19th century. With interests that combined the arts and sciences, Leonardo suited the mood of the day in a way that Michelangelo and Raphael did not, and in the eyes of intellectuals, who were supplanting aristocrats as the arbiters of taste, he became emblematic of the Renaissance.

For intellectuals, the *Mona Lisa* was an obliging subject: The painting was an open text into which one could read what one wanted; it was not a religious image; and the literary gazers were mainly men, and romantics at that, who decreed that, like all fascinating women, *La Gioconda* was dangerous. The historian Jules Michelet wrote he was drawn toward *Mona Lisa* “as the bird toward the snake.” The novelist Arsène Houssaye, a fanatical Leonardian, wrote of the image, “How cruel and divine, how enigmatic and sensual.”

The key promoter of *Mona Lisa*'s new image as a femme fatale was the litterateur and art critic Théophile Gautier (1811–72). Gautier was obsessed with women of the mythological and ancient world (Cleopatra, Helen), with oriental women, gypsy girls, and dark and mysterious Italian beauties. His fictional women are often unsettling, devouring. In a powerful article published in *Le Monde Universel* in 1855, Gautier set out his view of the *Mona Lisa*:

This strange being . . . her gaze promising unknown pleasures . . . her divinely ironic expression . . . her mocking lips subtly despising the common pleasures of mortals.

The British, too, lent their voices, foremost in the words of the essayist Walter Pater, whose much cited 1869 work on Leonardo pronounced *La Gioconda* "Leonardo's masterpiece," then continued:

She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas. . . . Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea.

One might fancy Lady Lisa, sitting on a heavenly cloud, shedding her slight smile and bursting into laughter at this extraordinary outpouring. Held up as the Eternal Feminine, she had come a long way from the criticism of Cassiano del Pozzo, who in 1625 described her succinctly and simply as "di faccia un alquanto larghetta" (a little puffy in the face).

If a function of art criticism is to enable the amateur viewer to have an opinion about a painting before seeing it, all the *Mona Lisa* needed at this point to thoroughly charm the masses was a photo opportunity.

Enter Vincenzo Peruggia, an émigré Italian carpenter in Paris. While working at the Louvre, he was told by a friend that the small, unprepossessing *Mona Lisa* was one of the most valuable paintings in the world. On August 21, 1911, he stole it. Reaction in the press and officialdom was swift. The Cabinet met. The director of paintings at the Louvre resigned. Parisians learned they had lost a masterpiece many did not realize they'd possessed, and they flocked to the Louvre to see the nail where it had hung. Postcards were printed, cartoons appeared mocking the security of the museum, songs were composed.

Two years later, after the clamor died down, Peruggia, who had kept the *Mona Lisa* in a box in his Paris bedsit, went to Florence hoping to sell it to a dealer, who immediately informed the authorities. Despite nationalist pressures to keep the painting, the Italian government returned the *Mona Lisa* to the Louvre, but not before exhibiting it in Florence and then Rome. In Paris, the public rushed to see their *Mona Lisa* safely back: more songs, more postcards, more cartoons, more headlines.

With the theft, the *Mona Lisa* became one of the world's most recognizable works of classical art. So, in the early years of the 20th century, when avant-garde artists wanted to send up high art, they turned to this image. In 1919, Marcel Duchamp used a traditional schoolboy method of desecration: He took a postcard of the painting and drew on a mustache and goatee; on the back he wrote LHOOG (the letters, read aloud in French, sound like

the words "she has a hot arse"). He repeated the joke several times with variations, including, in 1941, a drawing of only the mustache and beard.

A pattern was set: Artists would use the *Mona Lisa*, disfigure it, distort it, and play around with selected parts of it (the hands, the smile, the eyes). In Fernand Leger's 1930 *La Joconde aux Clefs*, the *Mona Lisa* is an object alongside of and no bigger than a set of keys. Fernando Botero rendered a plumpish *Mona Lisa Aged Twelve* in 1959. And in 1963, Andy Warhol painted *Thirty Are Better than One*. Magritte, Jasper Johns, and dozens of other artists—and cartoonists—followed suit. By now, almost every politician and celebrity of note has been caricatured as *Mona Lisa*: Golda Meir, Charles de Gaulle, Margaret Thatcher, Silvio Berlusconi, Monica Lewinsky.

IT WAS DURING THE 1960S THAT THE MONA LISA BEGAN to eclipse all other paintings. France gave it a helpful push on December 14, 1962, when the government carefully packed it in an airtight aluminum case for a trip in a first-class cabin in an ocean liner bound for the United States. The painting was unveiled in Washington, D.C., on January 8, at a glittering party in the presence of President and Mrs. Kennedy. In just over six weeks 1,751,521 people lined up to contemplate *La Gioconda* at the National Gallery in Washington and at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Newspapers juxtaposed the radiant smile of Jackie Kennedy with that of *Mona Lisa*, while souvenir manufacturers made quick profits. Twelve years later, in 1974, the enterprise was repeated as the French sent the *Mona Lisa* to Japan. By then, the image of *Mona Lisa* was everywhere.

Marketers have long made sporadic use of the *Mona Lisa*: There was an American corset in 1911 (the Corset *Mona Lisa*); even a British-made condom sold in Spain in the 1950s under the brand *Gioconda*. Since 1980, there has been, on average, one new advertisement a week bearing her image (an estimate based on examples forwarded to the Louvre by Jocondologists); they've touted products from computers to wine to luxury hotels to cosmetics. Advertisers use the *Mona Lisa* for their own ends, but at the same time they advertise the *Mona Lisa*.

So how could Lisa Gherardini fail? Painted by a genius, bought by a king, set in the heart of Paris, worshipped by intellectuals, kidnapped by an Italian, sent up by the avant garde, chosen to represent France abroad, and backed by the advertising industry—it is also, I think, quite a beautiful painting. ■

Donald Sassoon is professor of comparative European history at Queen Mary College, University of London, and the author of *One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the 20th Century* (1996), *Becoming Mona Lisa: The Making of an Icon* (2002), and *The Culture of the Europeans: From 1800 to the Present* (2006). His essay is drawn from a talk he gave during the week of March 14, when he was a distinguished visiting professor in the history department, sponsored by the Institute for the Liberal Arts and the Clough Center. Sassoon also took part in a faculty seminar on changing attitudes toward capitalism and led a graduate student workshop on cultural markets while on campus.



View Donald Sassoon's talk on the *Mona Lisa* at Full Story, via www.bc.edu/bcm.



Undated photo of workers in front of the Starachowice blast furnace, from a memorial book by former residents of Wierzbnik, Poland

EYEWITNESS

By Christopher Browning

The complications, for historians, of Holocaust testimony

IN FEBRUARY 1972, A MAN NAMED WALTHER BECKER stood in a courtroom in Hamburg, awaiting a verdict. Walther Becker had been a policeman in Weimar, Germany. In 1930, he joined the SPD, the German Socialist Party, a decision that cost him his job three years later when the Nazis came to power. But Walther Becker made his peace with the Nazis; he was reinstated in the police and in 1937 took up party membership. When war broke out, he was sent to the criminal police desk in a small industrial town in South Central Poland named Starachowice, where he was stuck for the war's duration, never transferred, never promoted, yet rising by attrition to ranking officer.

What brought Walther Becker to court in Hamburg was this: In the course of his (by Nazi standards) undistinguished career, he presided over the liquidation of the Jewish ghetto in the nearby Jewish town of Wierzbnik in October 1942, sending nearly 4,000 Jews to Treblinka (where none survived) and conveying some 1,600 to three rapidly constructed forced labor camps in Starachowice, there to work in factories that the Germans had confiscated.

Precisely because those 1,600 Jews were not sent to Treblinka, there was no lack of witnesses to testify in court after the war that Becker had played a very active role in those events, not only directing the liquidation, but also personally committing a number of killings and beatings. This was a rare case where, despite the Nazis' efforts to leave no witnesses, the German prosecutor had located dozens of people to come to the courtroom and testify in detail.

When Judge Wolf-Dietrich Ehrhardt read aloud his verdict, however, he began by stipulating that of all the evidence that the judiciary encounters, the least reliable is eyewitness testimony. The ideal eyewitness in his words, is "disinterested, indifferent . . . distanced," none of which could possibly apply to the Jewish witnesses who saw their families taken away or murdered. Ehrhardt pronounced that Becker must be acquitted. Walther Becker walked out of the court a free man and continued to enjoy his police pension.

When I encountered that verdict, I had been researching for nearly two decades in German judicial records. I had seen many court cases in which I felt that justice had not been served. But

this one took my breath away. My first reaction, quite simply, was anger: If Walther Becker could get away with an acquittal, I would at least put him and his deeds in historians' hell, between the covers of a book that would find its way into many major libraries.

However, when I began to investigate Walther Becker and his role in Starachowice and Wierzbnik more thoroughly, it became apparent to me that Walther Becker was not the most interesting part of my study. Nor was anger the best motive out of which to write history.

We know a great deal about the major ghettos, such as Warsaw and Lodz. We know a lot about the major death camps such as Auschwitz and Treblinka, and the major concentration camps, such as Dachau and Mauthausen. But alongside those camps run by the SS (special police), and the ghettos, were literally hundreds upon hundreds of small labor camps run not by the SS directly, but by German employers who got Jews allocated to them to work without pay.

These prisoners were slaves. They were property of the SS, contractually rented to German private enterprise on a per-head per-day basis. And this was a chapter of the Holocaust we knew very little about.

But how to learn more? German industry, unlike the German state bureaucracy, was not in love with its files, indeed had no trouble destroying paper trails. For the Braunschweig Steel Works, which ran the factories in Starachowice—a steel mill, a munitions plant, and a lumberyard (for making the crates to ship shells and grenades)—we have virtually no documents at all. This was not going to be a study that could rely on German documentation. Nor, as one might expect, could it depend on the testimony of any Germans involved. To write a history of the Starachowice camps, I would have to base it overwhelmingly on survivor testimonies.

THERE ARE KNOWN DANGERS IN THE USE OF SURVIVOR testimony. Take the case of Ivan Demjanjuk, or John Demjanjuk, the Cleveland autoworker who was identified by survivors from a photo spread as being Ivan the Terrible of Treblinka. On the basis of five survivor identifications, John Demjanjuk was extradited to Israel, put on trial, and sentenced to death in 1988. Then, while the case was under appeal, new evidence came out of the Soviet Union that indicated he was not Ivan the Terrible of Treblinka, but rather Ivan "the Less Terrible" of Sobibor. The Israeli Supreme Court had to void the lower court verdict and send Demjanjuk back to the United States, where after a long delay he was extradited to Germany and was convicted on May 12, 2011, as the Ivan he is.

In the view of many historians, Holocaust survivor testimony, with all the frailties of human memory, and of traumatized human memory, should be treated very carefully. It is important, my colleagues say, to demonstrate how survivors remembered events, how they felt about them, but their testimony can't be equated with factual accuracy. We may stand in awe of their testimony, but we cannot critically judge it, because we cannot begin to comprehend their experience.

Yet to eschew survivor testimony would be to let the three slave labor camps of Starachowice slip into oblivion. In all, I gathered testimonies from 292 survivors of those camps, some on multiple occasions. The first testimony was given just after libera-

tion in 1945, the last, a personal interview, took place in 2008 in Vancouver, Canada. And what have I learned about my eyewitness sources? It has become clear to me that memory is not a term that can be used in the singular. I was engaged in a kind of excavation project, uncovering layers of memory.

The first layer, and the one least accessible, consists of repressed memories. I initially became aware of this phenomenon not through survivors' accounts (they cannot testify to what they cannot remember), but through the experience of my uncle, a missionary in Singapore during World War II. When the Japanese conquered the island in February 1942, he managed to send his wife and young child across the Indian Ocean on one of the last ships off the island. He chose to stay on, because he felt he could not leave his flock. The Japanese treated his congregation simply as locals, but my uncle was immediately interned as an enemy alien, and he spent three and a half years in Changi Prison, emerging at half his body weight, barely alive. He had absolutely no memory of making a decision to stay. He could not have survived three and a half years if he had been beating himself up every day over that naive and unwise choice. It was only when he went back to his garden and dug up his diary that he became conscious that he had stayed when he could have escaped.

I'm certain that Holocaust survivors also suffered through traumatic experiences for which repression became the defense mechanism for survival. And I accept that there are some events we will never know.

A second layer of memory consists of secret memories. These are searing experiences that for the survivors are so sensitive they have never been told to anyone. Stealing bread from a bunk mate, deserting friends or family—the "choiceless choices," to use historian Lawrence Langer's phrase—some of these recollections eventually come out in a kind of confession ("This is the first time I have told anyone . . .").

Another layer is communal memory. This comprises events that people who were in the same ghetto, or the same camp, know about and talk about among themselves but tacitly understand should not be aired in public. Survivors share a sense that the conditions of their past are so alien from the world they now live in that others today might simplistically judge their actions entirely out of context.

And then there are the public memories, about which people do speak openly. These can be found in the videotaped testimonies collected by the Shoah Foundation at the University of Southern California, for instance, and in the transcribed testimonies that survivors have given to German investigators preparing for trial.

The line between public and private is not fixed. Over time, some memories that were secret or communal in the 1960s have become public. It is a historians' rule that the closer eyewitness testimony is to an event, the more reliable the account will be, and the further from the event, the more skeptical the historian must be. But among survivors dealing with sensitive topics, the later testimonies often prove more important, as we learn what was long held close.

IN ADDITION TO LAYERS OF TRUE MEMORY, THERE ARE mistaken memories that the historian must sort through. What I call collective memory is held by a group, in a way that filters out

some facts while playing up others. It is a reflection of how people want their past to be remembered, a reflection in some way of their present.

For example, if one looks at the testimonies of the Starachowice survivors who were settled in North America after the war, they describe the town most of them grew up in, Wierzbniak, as a traditionally orthodox Jewish community: People spoke Yiddish. They received religious instruction, in Yiddish, after public school. They don't mention the Bund, which was the Jewish Socialist Union. They don't mention the left-wing Zionist groups such as Hashomer Hatzair that crop up in memoirs out of Warsaw, say, Wierzbniak was a backwater.

Summertime

By Brian Turner


Barefoot, we walk through torpedo grass at noon—lightning flashing over the St. John's river, the shoreline banded for miles in tannin's metallic gradations, bull alligators drifting in the far shallows, and not one word spoken, just this shivering under an old hickory, the rain fallen hard, waves splashing against cypress knees.

With the sound of honeybees caught in blossoms of tar flower, our mouths hum, our limbs envelope each other the way fox-grape climbs, voicing its fruit among the air plants above. The arched soles of my feet press down into deadfall and leaf-rot as we unbutton the afternoon—by touch, by kiss, by the sliding heat of muscle

and groove, that sweet friction of bodies, which returns the gods to earth once more, frogs announcing their return in unison, to witness how stubborn and beautiful the human frame is in defiance of the inevitable, if only for an afternoon on the St. John's river, clap of thunder in the distance.

Love, I've spent a lifetime counting the thunder down. Let the gods express themselves in the ruin of water and stone. And let the dead stand among us, silent in their deep reserve. We will kiss until the pleated tips of the palmettos burn in copper and bronze. We will kiss until we are charged

with a trembling voltage, until our bodies connect heaven and earth.

Brian Turner has published two collections of poetry—*Here, Bullet* (2005) and *Phantom Noise* (2010). Often called a soldier-poet for his Army service in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Iraq, about which he frequently writes, he now directs the MFA program in creative writing at Sierra Nevada College. On April 12 he delivered a Lowell Lecture in Higgins Hall, and the following evening addressed student poets at the Greater Boston Intercollegiate Poetry Festival in the Murray Room.  Both of Turner's talks may be viewed at the Full Story via www.bc.edu/bcm.

If, on the other hand, one reads the community book produced in Israel in the 1970s that describes Wierzbniak during the 1930s, one finds a hotbed of Zionism, complete with youth discussion groups that carried over into soccer sides. To be sure, it was the town's Zionists who were more likely to relocate to Israel in the first place. Once there, they sensed they had to massage their past in a way that made them feel more presentable to the wider Israeli public. Here is a case where memories parted ways. The historian has to be conscious of how such changes take place.

Another challenge to historians arises from what I call incorporated memories, shaped, after the Holocaust, by exposure to documentaries, published memoirs (Elie Wiesel's *Night*, Primo Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz*), photographs, and other iconic tropes. These attach to a survivor's recollections because they have come to seem central to what it means to be a survivor.

In my research, a classic case of incorporated memory emerged from the evacuation of the Starachowice workers to the Birkenau extermination camp in the summer of 1944, as the Red Army approached. We know much about Birkenau's routines, how it was managed, how one generally entered the place: The train pulled up to a ramp. Prisoners got out, they formed two lines, men and women, and marched past an SS doctor, who in almost all accounts was Dr. Josef Mengele, even though he couldn't have been there all the time; with his baton, he signaled right, left, right, left, labor, death. This is certainly what happened with most transports entering Birkenau.

It is not what happened to the transport from Starachowice, which was handled as an internal transfer of labor. Starachowice's prisoners went into Birkenau without selection. I am convinced that is the case because the majority of survivors say so. They could not have made this up in unison. The survivors who were children at the time say, "The miracle of my survival, among the many miracles, is that when we came to Birkenau, there was no selection. I would not be alive otherwise."

And yet a significant minority of Starachowice survivors describe the standard entry into Birkenau: They got off the train. They formed the two lines. There was Mengele, and he was pointing left, right, left, right—and they believe this to be true. They believe it because they have incorporated the post-war stories into their own memory and they cannot distinguish between them.

All historical evidence is imperfect. If historians waited for perfect evidence, we would have very little history. At issue isn't whether to use survivor testimony or not. History is an imperfect science, and so—recognizing that all historical evidence is problematic in some way—we do the best we can under the circumstances. What we have from Starachowice are stories of survival, and for that we should be grateful. ■

Christopher Browning is the Frank Porter Graham Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and author of *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave Labor Camp* (2010). His essay is drawn from a Lowell Humanities Lecture delivered on February 28 in Devlin Hall.



View Christopher Browning's talk "Holocaust History and Survival Testimonies" at Full Story via www.bc.edu/bcm.

CHEMICALLY DEPENDENT

By Dave Denison

Tracking the effects of childhood stress

Why do mistreated children so often demonstrate antisocial or aggressive behavior later in life? Alexa Veenema, an assistant professor of psychology at Boston College, looks for answers at the molecular level, in the chemicals that help the brain regulate social behavior.

As Veenema wrote in a 2009 article in the journal *Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology*, many studies have established a link in humans between “early social deprivation or trauma” (physical abuse, for instance, or the loss of a parent) and a heightened incidence of “conduct disorders, personality disorders, major depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, and anxiety disorders.” A core symptom of most, if not all, of those afflictions is aggression, she notes.

To study the neurobiological connection between early-life stress and later aggression, Veenema uses a method common in her field—subjecting newborn male rats to a pattern of “maternal separation.” For the first 14 days of their lives, the infant rats are kept from their mothers for three hours a day. In various experiments, Veenema and her colleagues have found that newborn rats that experience this deprivation go on to exhibit abnormally aggressive behavior—biting and nape attacks—as adults. The results have led Veenema to suppose that increased aggression is tied to changes in how the rats’ brains process social information. But when do such changes occur—and how?

In a study published last year in *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, Veenema and a team of four colleagues set out to determine the extent to which previously separated rats are able to distinguish between rats that are strangers and rats they’ve encountered before, as compared with a control group. Testing both juveniles and adults, she introduced a known and an unknown rat into each subject’s cage, then timed the identification process—accomplished by rats, as by dogs, through sniffing. The expectation was that familiarization would occur more quickly with prior acquaintances. The results showed that juvenile separated rats performed similarly to the control group; the adult separated rats, however, had more difficulty recognizing acquaintances. Veenema’s conclusion: “Certain behavioral effects of early-life stress” may only emerge “later in life.”

“Now it becomes very interesting for us,” Veenema says, recounting the experiment in her McGuinn Hall office. Studies show that a small protein or neuropeptide called vasopressin, which is synthesized and released in the brains of rats and humans, plays a key role in regulating emotional and social behavior. Veenema set out to monitor vasopressin levels in separated and control rats, tracking changes that occurred as the rats underwent their identification test over time.

By inserting a tiny microdialysis probe—a monitoring device that simulates a capillary—into the rats’ brains, Veenema and her colleagues were able to track (and alter) the amounts of vasopressin present. They found that among five-week-old, prepubescent juveniles—whether in the separated or control group—the levels of the protein were similar. Among 16-week-old adult separated rats, however, the levels were depressed. When Veenema gave rats in this group an injection of vasopressin via the probe, their social discrimination skills surfaced, for the moment, intact.

Veenema is now investigating the different effects of vasopressin, and of another neuropeptide called oxytocin, with regard to gender. Manipulating vasopressin levels can produce opposite effects in male and female rats, and oxytocin is known to play an important role in social development in female brains. Veenema says these chemicals may relate to the well-documented differences in the incidence of certain psychiatric disorders reported between males and females. “Autism is a good example,” she says, “where boys have a four times higher chance of developing autism than girls do.”

In early 2011, Veenema, who joined the Boston College psychology department last fall, was awarded a Young Investigator Award from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation (formerly the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression). She says she and the five members of her laboratory will use the two-year, \$60,000 grant to investigate the role of vasopressin and oxytocin in regulating juvenile behavior in male and female rats, as a way of furthering their understanding of “possible mechanisms” underlying the sex-bias in human psychiatric disorders.





Basile in an examination room at the National Naval Medical Center

Improviser

by Jerry Filteau

Lt. Cmdr. Patrick L. Basile, MD, '97

As director of microsurgery in the department of plastic and reconstructive surgery at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, Lt. Cmdr. Patrick L. Basile performs muscle, skin, vascular, and nerve transplants on wounded members of the military. The work is exacerbated by the multiple serious injuries many of his patients have suffered, a circumstance that "limits the number of donor sites I can use to reconstruct a part of their body," says Basile, and often demands a "new algorithm" of treatment.

A native of Colombia, Basile was adopted shortly after birth and raised on Long Island. At Boston College he majored in psychology and met classmate Shannon Wilcox, whom he married in 1996. Basile attended the college of medicine at the SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York, assisted by the Navy's health professions scholarship program. He chose to concentrate in plastic and reconstructive surgery, he says, because it is "one of the last surgical specialties that operates on the entire body." In return for tuition support, he is committed to spending four years as a military doctor, an obligation he will fulfill in 2013.

Four days a week, around 6:30 A.M., he enters Building 10 on the 243-acre

medical campus, where he and another doctor share a small cubicle. After an hour of rounds, he begins his first surgery—which can last eight hours—and continues operating almost nonstop for as many as 15 hours. Eighty percent of his surgeries involve casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan. In combat or encounters with cobbled explosive devices, modern body armor and battlefield medicine save lives that once would have been lost, but many survivors are left with horrendous injuries to the arms, legs, neck, and head.

The remaining 20 percent of Basile's work includes repairing birth defects such as cleft palates, reconstructive surgery for breast cancer patients, and rhinoplasty. Like other Naval Medical physicians, Basile may be called on to treat the President, members of Congress and the Supreme Court, and senior government officials, as well as active duty service members, veterans, and their families.

Basile is not sure what his course will be after he completes his military requirement. In the meantime, it seems likely that within a year or so, he will embark on a nine-month tour of duty performing surgery in Afghanistan.

Jerry Filteau is a writer in Washington, D.C.

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The 2011 Distinguished Volunteer Award recipients, honored March 25 at the Fairmont Copley Plaza in Boston, are (back row, from left) Philip W. Schiller '82; Kim D. Gassett-Schiller; Charles I. Clough, Jr. '64, P'87; '93, '98; David T. Griffith '68, P'00, '02, '06; (front row, second from left) Danielle V. Auriemma '10; and the Class of 2005 Reunion Committee represented by Timothy Harvey '05; Stephanie Miles Klock '05; and Doug Wakefield '05. Photograph by Rose Lincoln